

the Beaver

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A partner for peace?

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LSE admissions revealed

- THE SCHOOL STILL BELOW HEFCE BENCHMARK FOR STATE SCHOOL STUDENTS
- RUSSELL GROUP UNIVERSITIES ALSO FAIL TO RECRUIT

Doug Oliver
Senior Reporter

Statistics uncovered by *The Beaver* have shown a rise of three percent in admissions to the London School of Economics (LSE) from the British state school sector this year.

Despite the rise, the School yet again fell short of its official Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) benchmark for state school recruitment and was below the London average.

The provisional figures, supplied to *The Beaver* by the School's Head of Recruitment and Admissions, Catherine Baldwin, show that the number of students being admitted from state schools rose to 65 percent this year from 62 percent in 2005. This represents a rise of eight percent over the last decade.

However, state school students - who make up 93 percent of the secondary school

population - remain significantly under-represented on campus.

Although LSE Students' Union (SU) General Secretary, Jimmy Tam, described the figures as "very encouraging", he said there was "more to be done" by the School and by students to increase participation

65%
of LSE Freshers
came from state
schools in 2005

in under-represented groups.

In March last year, it was revealed by *The Beaver* that the School has secret quotas for state school students following a report in *The Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES)

magazine which said the school set aside 40 places exclusively for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Chairman of the Student Affairs Committee, Prof. Ray Richardson, said at the time that the scheme did not represent "a quota system... but a small pilot scheme to provide some compensation for possible handicaps facing some applicants."

Baldwin explained that the School was given funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with the intention that it would be used to widen participation.

She further explained that when considering undergraduate applications, admissions tutors always considered the personal and educational backgrounds of students and were "not discriminating against more advantaged students."

Each application form was marked, she said, with information on the percentage of 5 A*-C

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Photograph: Alex Teytobym

LSE re-examines the future of the Towers

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Racist graffiti in library is 'immature'

Patrick Graham
Senior Reporter

The regular appearance of racist graffiti in many different locations around the School's campus has been roundly condemned by both LSE staff and student representatives.

This follows a letter in last week's edition of *The Beaver* in which the School was accused

of being "one of the most racist and xenophobic institutions in Britain" by a student member of the International History Department.

Crude comments and drawings continue to appear regularly in locations such as the men's toilets in the LSE's Library, and are predominantly anti-Semitic, Islamophobic or anti-American in nature.

Shanela Haque, the LSE Students' Union (SU) Anti-

Racism Officer, told *The Beaver* that everyone at the LSE has to work together to tackle the ongoing problem. She went on to say, "It is appalling that in such a diverse, bright and intellectual community we have such acts of ignorance and insensitivity."

The LSE's diverse community is one of the great things about it and to attack one person is to attack all of us... Nobody must be made to feel

less equal because of where they come from."

In a joint statement, the LSE SU's General Secretary Jimmy Tam, and Education and Welfare Office Alexandra Vincenti, echoed Haque's comments, highlighting the diverse, multicultural nature of the LSE's student population.

They told *The Beaver*, "We were deeply worried when we read the letter in *The Beaver*. We can assure all students that

such offensive graffiti is not acceptable on campus and any attempt to write such abuse will be taken very seriously by the School and the Union."

Vincenti has now asked the School to carry out an inspection of all toilets on campus in order to establish where the graffiti is most frequently appearing.

The LSE's Head of Security, Bernie Taffs, explained that the School's

cleaners are re-directed to remove the offending graffiti during the course of their other duties. He told *The Beaver* that the graffiti projected an "immaturity" and "cowardliness" that was "inappropriate for our School."

Taffs also confirmed that he had asked to meet with the presidents of the LSE SU Jewish Society and the LSE SU Islamic Society "so that we

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Features: *David Cameron*



Is Cameron ready to become the next Prime Minister?

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COLLEGE BREAKS AWAY FROM
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MATTI VANHANEN ADDRESSES
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LSE SU LGBT Officer steps down

St. Philips continues to turn away new students

Laura Deck
Senior Reporter

Many students are still unable to register at the St. Philips Medical Centre as the dispute between the London School of Economics (LSE) and the Medical Centre remains unresolved for another week.

Students are being encouraged to wait to register at St. Philips if possible and are being asked to pay attention to updates provided by the School.

This week, an announcement was posted on the Medical Centre's website explaining that it was limiting registration to include only those students who reside within the postcodes WC1, WC2, EC1 and EC2.

These areas represent the geographical range St. Philips is required to cover. Only two halls of residence, High Holborn and Grosvenor House, fall within this area.

The School confirmed that students have been turned away from the Medical Centre and that the names of students turned away have been noted so that they can be properly informed of further developments.

LSE Students' Union (SU) Education and Welfare Officer, Alexandra Vincenti, reported

that students who were unable to register were informed of the General Practitioner (GP) closest to their place of residence.

Vincenti explained that "the message at School inductions and on our website has been to wait and register later if at all possible. Just as soon as information is available we will

"I went to the doctor and they told me they weren't taking any new people. I was given the NHS details and was told to find a doctor nearer to me"
- LSE student

get it out to [students]."

The *Beaver* spoke to student Lois Jeary, a resident at Carr-Saunders Hall, who tried to register at the Medical Centre in person. "I went to the doctor and they told me they weren't taking any new people. I was given the National Health Service (NHS) details and was told to find a doctor nearer to me," she said.

Another Carr-Saunders resident, Erica Gornall, told

The *Beaver* that she tried to register online over the summer but the link provided had expired. She tried again at the beginning of the year but only the form for the previous academic year was posted on the website.

"Like all of the others that applied, the first I heard that they were not accepting new students was from *The Beaver*," said Gornall, who felt insulted that "[the School] didn't even have the decency to explain the situation or simply tell us we could not register. If this had been known many would have made provisions at another GP, so much time has been wasted."

The dispute appears to have arisen following funding and staffing issues at the Medical Centre.

St. Philips' GP Dr. R.O.M. Naidoo told *The Beaver* that he met with LSE management last Wednesday and that they were "keen to resolve things."

Fellow GP Dr. A. Busseti stated "I remain hopeful that a mutually acceptable solution can be found in due course."

The School reported that developments have been made over the last week but that no estimate of how long the situation would last could be made until Monday or Tuesday of this week. Students would be fully informed of any such changes.

An LSE spokesperson said,

"School staff have talked at some length with Dr. Naidoo and the Medical Centre staff in an effort to resolve this registration problem for a large number of students. The problem appears to relate to staff issues and funding.

The School has always been committed to supporting the Medical Centre and last year more funding was agreed on for an extra GP for the service. We have also made more funding available for Centre administrative staff. We are now waiting to hear from the Medical Centre when they think registrations can be resumed."

Dr. Naidoo explained to *The Beaver* last week that the dispute had been exacerbated by changes in the NHS and in the structure of the LSE.

Vincenti acknowledged that NHS changes have caused "additional strains on GP practices," while offering reassurances to students, pointing out that "no student will be seriously affected if they do not register. All students on campus who fall ill unexpectedly are treated here automatically."

She reported that the LSE SU is actively working to help find a resolution.

Meanwhile, LSE students expressed frustration with the situation. "It's so inconvenient. If worst comes to the worst, I could go home for a doctor, but many people can't do that. It

was really disappointing," said one student.

Optimism appeared to wane on both sides as the problem continued. Dr. Naidoo reported that the situation is still under discussion and he remained unsure of where it would lead. "I continue to remain optimistic despite these

events," he said.

Vincenti reported that "negotiations were moving faster earlier in the week. We have now hit additional problems. We hope to have a clearer understanding by next Tuesday."



Student outside St. Philips Medical Centre

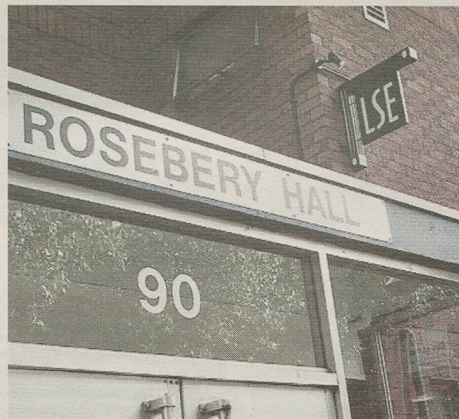
Photograph: Aditi Nangia

Rosebery break-in raises security issues

■ Students told to be more vigilant, following theft in Hall



Rosebery Hall security camera (left), Police warning sign near Hall (far right)



Roger Lewis

A break-in at the London School of Economics (LSE)'s Rosebery Hall has led to heightened security and calls for more awareness.

The incident at the LSE hall of residence occurred on 30 September, a Saturday, and involved a first-year student.

The student, who wished to remain anonymous, told *The Beaver* that they had let a man into their room at approximately ten o'clock that night.

The man had claimed entry on the grounds that he was checking the electrical systems

in the room.

The perpetrator had spent time surveying electrical items in the room and then left. Moments later the victim had come to realise that both their phone and wallet - containing over 60 pounds - had been stolen.

The student promptly alerted the Hall's security staff who immediately contacted the police.

After surveying security camera footage from the preceding two hours, security staff had been unable to detect the suspect entering the building.

This led them to conclude that the suspect, described as

tall and lean, had been in the building for over two hours prior to the crime - possibly identifying opportunities.

The victim told *The Beaver*, "after speaking to the police they have stressed that there are a group of professionals currently targeting freshers in the vicinity of Rosebery Hall."

Posters were put up around the Hall following the incident and emails were sent out to residents urging vigilance.

Students were asked to "always close and lock your room door", "never let anyone walk into the Hall behind you if you don't know them" and "never let anyone into your

room if you don't know them."

Students were also told to call the reception "immediately" if they noticed anything or anyone suspicious.

However, concern has risen among many residents over security within the hall. One resident, preferring not to be named, commented, "most responsibility lies with the hall. How did he get in?"

A student Hall Security Officer stated "Students should be more careful. We have reiterated security advice by placing posters throughout the hall."

This was echoed by LSE Students' Union (SU) Residences Officer, Louise

Robinson, who told *The Beaver*, "it is crucial that students look out for themselves and each other, but also note practical changes that could be made to make their halls more secure."

Expressing concern that security in halls was and still is a "big issue," Robinson continued, "students need to pressure their halls to act in the interests of their safety and welfare, as it is a very disturbing prospect that rooms, but more importantly residents appear so vulnerable."

Rosebery Hall warden, Dr Razeen Sally, was unavailable for comment.

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know each others faces and they know where to go if they have any problems."

Mustafa Davies, President of the SU Islamic Society said "Bernie Taffs has been in touch and been very supportive..."

He continued, "I think these types of graffiti are abhorrent acts of intolerance, be they anti-Semitic, Islamophobic or anti-American. I wouldn't however go so far as saying that I feel there's an underlying culture of intolerance at the LSE. The vast majority of people are very well read, intellectual, open minded and generally accepting of other religions and cultures."

Davies also said, "I'm certainly not angered by the graffiti. If anything it makes me realise the importance of getting involved in student life, and expounding the truth about Islam, and in doing so offer a long term solution to the graffiti issue."

Ben Epstein, the continuing Treasurer of the Jewish Society, told *The Beaver* that he had heard of swastikas plastered in certain toilets in the Old Building.

Epstein said "the LSESU Jewish Society questions why students who write racist or xenophobic graffiti in toilets, choose to study at a university as world-renowned for its ethnic diversity as the LSE. A few prejudiced scribbles is a disappointing achievement for the authors of such graffiti, who boast such a privileged educational background."

A spokesperson for the School noted that any reports of offensive graffiti would be taken very seriously.

UGM motion on arms funding cut short after debate; resumes this week

Patrick Cullen
Senior Reporter

A motion that would attempt to mandate the LSE Students' Union (SU) and the School to "ensure that they don't invest in or accept donations from" any of 13 companies closely linked to the global arms trade was debated at last Thursday's Union General Meeting (UGM).

The motion, titled 'Arms Trade' was proposed by Aled Fisher, the SU's Environment and Ethics Officer, and James Caspell a Student Governor on LSE Council and Male Co-Chair of the LSE SU Green Party.

Due to time constraints imposed by the elections for Chair and Vice-Chair, the motion was neither fully debated nor voted on.

Ross K Allan, of the Debate Society stood as a speaker against the motion. In spite of cries from the UGM to "Move to Vote", the newly elected UGM Chair, Daisy O'Brien, cut Fisher's speaking time down to one minute, and cut off Allan in mid-flow, before the UGM came to a close.

The motion follows the revelation in *The Beaver* that the London School of Economics (LSE) has received over £125,000 over the course

of the last five years from at least two high-profile companies closely linked to the global arms trade. As reported by *The Beaver* last week, the School has so far refused to disclose the names of the two companies involved, claiming that to do so would not be in the "public interest."

However, a spokesperson for the School confirmed to *The Beaver* that the funds from the companies have gone directly to two academics for conducting research at the LSE.

Allan told *The Beaver*, "I spoke on Thursday ultimately because I didn't feel enough had been said about the motion for us to be sure that there was a consensus of opinion behind it for us to pass it as policy of our Union."

He continued, "rubber-stamping what is no doubt a well meant but not necessarily well thought-out motion while many students are leaving to get to class would hardly have made Union policy-making look any better."

Both Allan and Fisher have both agreed that there was not enough time to properly discuss the motion. Fisher expanded on his truncated argument to *The Beaver*, saying that "the financial case is also strong. The LSE has a large surplus and does not need donations from companies that deal in death... I would argue that even if we



James Caspell (left), Aled Fisher (right)

needed this money, the moral argument would stand."

He continued, "Nevertheless, the financial argument remains, this motion will not lose the SU any money. It has the full support of Joel [Kenrick]. The SU does not invest in or accept donations from the 13 listed companies - the motion just makes this practice official."

Allan told *The Beaver*, "Aled contributed no substan-

tial reason to move in favour of this motion other than an emotional plea that companies who produce arms are indirectly responsible for harm and devastation throughout the world, and that apparently because the LSE doesn't educate engineers or scientists we are not deserving of donations from such companies."

He continued, "I have no set intention to speak out for the arms trade" on Thursday.

Nonetheless, I am yet to hear a convincing reason as to why I should support the motion, and I don't believe I am alone in saying that."

The motion has been automatically re-submitted for this week's UGM. Simon Douglas, a member of the Constitution and Steering Committee (C & S) said that he would recommend that the motion was re-started from the beginning.



Union Jack

Not a bad UGM Jack thought, looking at the mix of newbies and veterans on offer.

Camp Tam held his own, making the proceedings Newsround-esque. Joel kept asking us what we thought about his fun fair, Ali took some flack for the website (which tells visitors to go elsewhere) and Alex wasn't even there.

All the part-time Exec looked very cheerful, queuing up to talk to us, before joining together on stage like some sickening happy-clappy choir.

Or perhaps huddling together on stage to collectively fight off the tough questions (there were none, Neighbours and Rishi-comparisons the closest thing and they claimed to have forgotten both).

The real fun though was an unusually lively set of elections - anyone would think they meant something.

Three hopeful souls jogged up to the unforgiving stage to knock Van Man off his perch as Chair, and against the odds, one of them did.

Daisy O'Brien (DOB) made Paul a Church-gor and in the highly dubious North-Korean style voting system (three votes anyone?) gave Van Man more time to spend with his balcony and get "carried away."

And the AU will certainly need him.

Things were looking pathetically thin on the ground on the once-mighty upstairs.

With Kav integrated with his new chums on the SU Exec and ready to jump into Van's washed-up Sabb dreams, there's a vacancy for a new leader.

Jack thinks with Van Man back where he belongs, the balcony should be back in business (C&S watch out).

So with DOB in the chair, just time to rubber stamp some minute-taking gimp in as vice-chair - except that for the first time ever, more than one person wanted to do it!

Limp Church tried again, but couldn't even bring himself to share a bad joke with us, so Cockney-Russian Alex Tittleatlet snuck in (and resigned hours later).

DOB got off to a bad start, forgetting all that she'd learned from her gin-fueled three weeks on C&S while some AU wag tried to sack C&S for counting too accurately.

Flaky Simon Douglas (no relation to Doug Oliver, they're both just missing surnames) did his best to get himself fired by giving the worst speech ever, but there was no appetite for more elections...this week.

By this time easily-Led Fisher and James Cesspit were jumping in the aisles for their motions, but Resident Robinson simply had to ask a time wasting question about time wasting.

By then, the Chinese and other real students were here for their Accounting & Finance lecture and the UGM was shut-down. Fisher will just have to simmer about arms for another week.

Same time, same place...

First UGM of the year ends in chaos



Tam talks (right), C&S counting votes (below right), Executive committee reports (above)

Patrick Cullen
Senior Reporter

The first Union General Meeting (UGM) of the year was held last week with the tradition of paper-throwing in evidence despite last year's ban.

Elections for UGM Chair were held initially, with the eventual winner being Daisy O'Brien, a former member of the LSE Students' Union (SU) Constitution and Steering Committee (C&S). She is also a current member on the LSE SU Finance and Services Committee (F&S).

The post was also contested by last year's UGM Chair Van Livanis, LSE SU Conservative Society member Paul Church

and newcomer Ruhana Ali. Several rounds of voting were conducted, during which C&S members were called to help with the count.

"I didn't know what the hell was going on, paper was flying everywhere and no one seemed to have any control."

- First-year student

Elections were also held for the position of UGM Vice-Chair. The post was contested by Ali, Church and UGM newcomer Alex Teytelboym. A close vote resulted, with C&S needing to split the floor to decide

on the eventual winner, Teytelboym.

A vote of no-confidence in C&S was called for following the considerable delay in the counting of votes; however it did not gain the required majority to pass.

The Beaver spoke to James Ketteringham of C&S, who declared that "it wasn't very fair as it's hard to count people when they're waving their arms around."

Teytelboym has since resigned from his post due to personal reasons.

One first year student said, "I didn't know what the hell was going on, paper was flying everywhere and no one seemed to have any control."



Photograph: Aditi Nangia

Imperial divorces the UL

- Imperial moves to full independence, now 19 members in the University of London
- LSE aiming to award its own degrees, demands better structure

Chris Lam
News Editor

Imperial College London has officially left the University of London (UL) following long-standing discussions between the two sides. Imperial expects to be fully independent by July 2007.

Rector of Imperial College, Sir Richard Sykes, told *The Guardian* newspaper, "This is a major step on our road to full independence and I'm particularly pleased that we are able to manage it in time for our 100th birthday. My thanks go to the University of London for their cooperation, which has enabled us to quickly reach an agreement that is good news for all at the college."

Meanwhile, the London School of Economics (LSE) has

"We have considered doing an Imperial"
- Howard Davies
LSE Director

denied that it will be immediately following suit, but said it is still considering its position.

LSE Director Sir Howard Davies told *The Beaver*, "We have considered 'doing an Imperial', but though the university is not absolutely crucial

for us and we use the LSE brand exclusively, we do make more use of the central parts of the university than Imperial, so we are not quite in the same position."

He elaborated, "Partly that is a matter of geography, partly that some people here study or research subjects where the UL library is relevant and the

powers. At present, LSE students' degrees are awarded by the UL.

A spokesperson for the School noted, "There is no value added from a UL degree here because the LSE name has such a high profile."

Davies added that the School's position is not to leave if "we are allowed to issue our

degrees, which we have asked to do." He told *The Beaver* that the School would also want "major changes to the governance arrangements which give the colleges more power."

Membership of the UL cur-

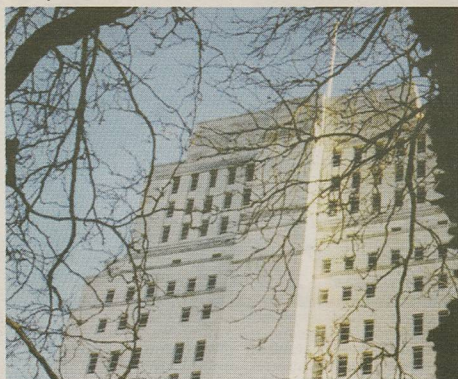
rently costs LSE about £300,000 per annum. As members of the UL, LSE students have automatic access to the Senate House Library on Malet Street which contains more than two million books, many of which are unavailable at the School.

The federal university also coordinates intercollegiate halls, a careers service and an accommodation office for students seeking accommodation away from halls.

Although Imperial has left, it appears that the UL's existence is not in doubt, with more institutions around London becoming members. There are currently 19 members, which include University College London (UCL), King's College London, the London Business School and Goldsmiths.

One LSE student who wished to remain anonymous said, "I don't use any of the facilities at UL because they are too far away. Why would I use the accommodation office at UL, when there is one on campus, and I can't see myself heading all the way to Malet Street to study."

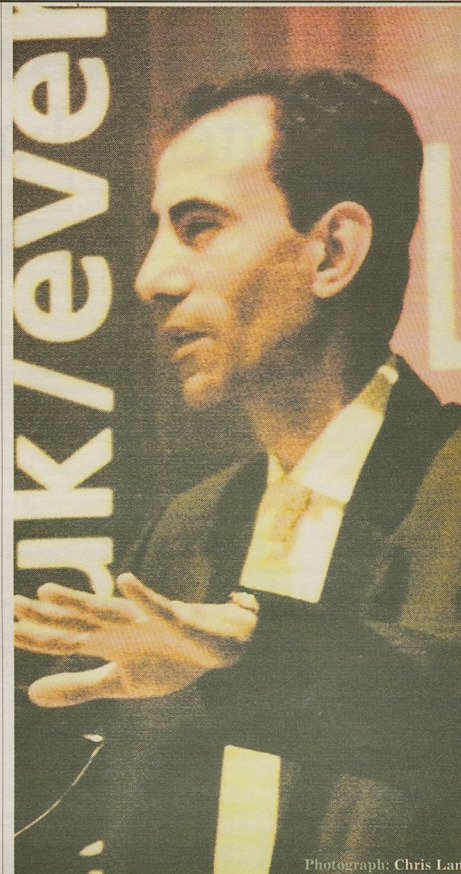
Steve Gummer, a third year LSE law student added, "To be honest, being at a university with the prestige of the LSE, I don't see why my degree should be awarded by the University of London instead of the School."



University of London's Senate House

School of Advanced Studies too. We do keep an open mind for the future, however the position is quite fluid at present."

The LSE is currently in negotiations with the UL to have its own degree awarding



Yosri Fouda of Al-Jazeera speaks at the LSE, see next page

LSE plumetts in rankings

Ali Moussavi

The London School of Economics (LSE) has been placed 17th out of 200 in the 'World University Rankings 2006', a ranking conducted by the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES) magazine.

While the LSE has dropped six places from 11th in 2005, it has remained in the top 20. Top honours in the ranking were claimed by Harvard University.

Although the top 20 world universities remain dominated by American institutions, British universities Cambridge and Oxford were placed second and third respectively. Imperial College London also managed a top ten position, being ranked ninth.

Over the last three years, the rankings have showcased the trend of American universities consistently outranking their British counterparts; serving to highlight the vast difference in university endowments between Britain and the United States.

While US universities are largely funded by private sector donations, British institutions receive government funding. Harvard's endowment of \$26 billion (£13.8 billion) exceeds the total annual funding for all British universities.

Recent press reports have identified the LSE as a member of a new group of universities known as 'G5', which has begun to act independently as a

lobby and pressure group pushing for more government funding in order to maintain a global academic edge alongside the United States.

Previously, in 2004 and 2005, the LSE was ranked second behind Harvard in the THES Social Science Rankings. However, social science rankings were not available this year. The LSE did however rank joint-third with Stanford University in terms of

THES Rankings	
1.	Harvard University
2.	Cambridge
3.	Oxford
4.	M.I.T
5.	Yale University
6.	Stanford University
7.	California Inst of Tech
8.	UC Berkeley
9.	Imperial College
10.	Princeton University

recruitment - below only Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Professor Paul Johnson, the School's Deputy Director for Planning and Resources, said, "LSE remains one of the top 20 ranked universities in the world. We appear to have similar scores in these THES rankings to those in 2005 - indeed improving our faculty to student measure - but the rankings methodology has been amended, which has affected the position of various universities."

BBC home not on LSE shopping list

Tanya Rajapakse
News Editor

The London School of Economics (LSE) has firmly denied reports that it is planning on buying Bush House, currently occupied by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

According to *The Times* newspaper, the LSE has put in a bid for Bush House as part of its expansion plans and is looking to take over the space once the BBC vacates it in ten years time. However, several sources within the School have stated that no such plans are in place at this point of time.

The reports about Bush House come at a point when the School is planning for its steady growth by taking on new developments and refurbishments to increase space and avoid issues of overcrowding.

Figures released by the School indicate that this year it recruited 4961 new undergraduates and postgraduates, bringing the current number of total full-time students at the LSE to slightly over 8000.

The Beaver has learnt that these recruitment figures are in excess of the School's targets for the present academic year. A spokesperson for the LSE confirmed that this number was, "some 267 students over the registration target."

However, LSE's Academic Registrar, Simeon Underwood, told *The Beaver*, "Recruitment is never an exact science, and over-recruitment at this level is well within the bounds of tolerance. The School's plan is for

steady growth to 9,000 students by 2012."

The School's growth plan led to the acquisition of the 24 Kingsway building in October 2004. The LSE has invested £63 million in renovating the building, originally built in 1912, and the project is expected to be completed by autumn 2008.

The 'New Academic Building', as 24 Kingsway is

Management School and Law Department onto the third to seventh floors.

According to a spokesperson for the School, the New Academic Building will "effectively double the School's teaching space."

The School has also recently refurbished the Towers, leading to the addition of the U8 teaching room which seats

the future of the Towers is ongoing, with underlying opinion that better use of the site is needed.

The School has also confirmed that it is considering the redevelopment of Clare Market Building and St. Clements Building following the completion of 24 Kingsway. Both buildings are from the 1960s and have been recognised as requiring an overhaul.

LSE Students' Union (SU) General Secretary, Jimmy Tam, noted that, "overcrowding is obviously a big concern for many students but I think LSE's unique environment can often lead to a perception that it is overcrowded. The important issue is that all students have access to the resources and services they require."

He said he thought it important that the School has "careful plans" for its expected growth and supported the New Academic Building claiming its arrival, "will give students and academics a great addition to LSE's provision of teaching space."

On the subject of the SU's plans for dealing with increasing student numbers, Tam told *The Beaver*, "we are writing our five-year strategic plan to give the Union a longer-term vision and so we can apply for more resources from the School to deal with the expected growth in student numbers."

When asked about the proposed SU building, Tam stated that he was unsure of the exact location although "the current idea is to move the SU to the island site where the Kings' Chambers currently are..."

Tam did not provide a definite time-frame for the move.



BBC's Bush House

now known, is proposed to have 11 floors in total containing four lecture theatres and two floors of further teaching facilities.

The upper floors are expected to house departmental and academic offices, with plans in place to move the new

about 160 students. A further 17 rooms have also been updated within the Towers and another 15 rooms have been renovated across campus with the addition of "improved teaching equipment as well as new room decoration."

However, speculation about

Poor representation of state school students across top UK universities

The UK's top universities continue to miss their Higher Education benchmarks for state school students

Continued from Front Page

grades of the applicants' school. Information from the candidate's statement about their personal and domestic circumstances was also considered. As Richardson told *THE BEAVER* last year, "the reasoning is that someone who gets 2As and a B in a school where this is unusual might have more potential than someone from a school, independent or state."

In recent years, the School has launched a number of schemes to 'Widen Participation' and boost the number of applications from disadvantaged groups. Baldwin said "our task is to show students that if you are a capable candidate, LSE would welcome your application, whatever your background."

LSE's Widening Participation Coordinator, Katy Redfern, told *The Beaver* "the schemes - first launched in 1998 - are aimed not just at increasing the number of applications to the School, but also at encouraging pupils to discover new opportunities and to fulfil their potential." She hailed the 'Aiming for a College Education' (ACE) days, which are aimed at students in year 9 and 10 and provide workshops that give an insight into life at university. 92 percent of stu-

has set up the 'LSE CHOICE' and 'LSE Maths' schemes for talented pupils at sixth form level in the London area. 50 to 100 students are also involved in the 'Student Shadowing Scheme', the majority of who, according to Redfern, "decide to apply to LSE after their time with us."

Despite recent rises in state school admissions, Baldwin acknowledged that there were still problems with certain groups being significantly under-represented at university.

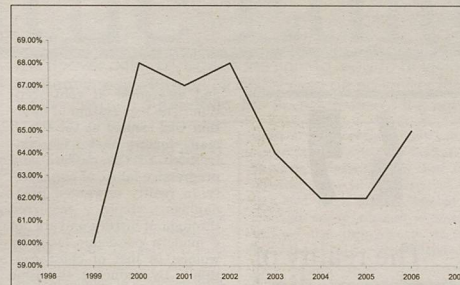
She pointed to research by The Sutton Trust, which shows that "many students from some disadvantaged backgrounds still do not apply to top universities for reasons of culture or capital."

State school educated Tam wished to praise the work of the School in trying to widen participation, but argued that more needed to be done. He said, "the high expense of studying and living in London is unfortunately an increasing consideration for applicants...we need to ensure that the most able students from all sectors of society are able to apply to LSE."

He challenged students to "do our bit too." He noted, "I recently ran a summer school class on student politics...why not go into your old school and offer to do a talk on the benefits of higher education?"

Meanwhile, the effect of top-up fees on admissions remains unclear at this point in time. Having been introduced this autumn, there have been fears that the £3,000 a year fee might cause students to re-think applying to university.

The National Union of Students (NUS) recently said, "this autumn, thousands of students will be missing out on a university education after being priced out of a degree by the introduction of top-up fees." They expressed "deep concern at figures which reveal that many universities across the sector (including LSE) are failing to meet targets for

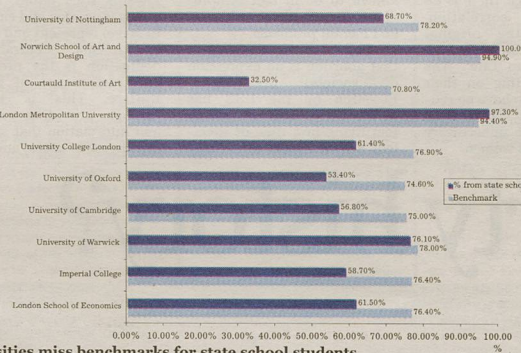


Percent of state school students at the LSE in last five years

At a Glance: How LSE compares

University	% From Low Participation Neighbourhoods	Benchmark (%)
London School of Economics	4.3	9.0
Imperial College	8.4	9.2
The University of Warwick	6.9	9.4
The University of Cambridge	5.8	9.7
The University of Oxford	4.6	8.5
University College London	6.4	9.7
London Metropolitan University	15.4	18.3
Courtauld Institute of Art	2.5	8.2
Norwich School of Art and Design	12.4	14.7

Universities miss benchmarks for low participation neighbourhoods



Universities miss benchmarks for state school students

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency, www.hesa.ac.uk

"Our task is to show students that if you are a capable candidate, LSE would welcome your application, whatever your background" - Catherine Baldwin, Head of Admissions

Students who had attended ACE said that the experience made them more likely to want to attend university.

More recently, the School

widening access."

However, the rise in state school admissions to LSE this year - after a three-year downward trend - might ease such concerns slightly.

Baldwin argued that "perhaps perversely, the top-up fee system will leave many lower-income students better off because of the introduction of bursaries and up front fees. However, there is a tough message to get across to those students from poorer backgrounds who are averse to debt that a university education is in the long-term financially and intellectually worthwhile."

She described a "significant groundswell in widening participation...the message is filtering through to schools of the value of higher education." As a result, "more students than ever before are applying to university."

She highlighted in particular the work of the former polytechnics in promoting wider participation in higher education.

The rise in admissions this year shows the School experiencing a national trend which has seen most of the elite Russell Group universities increase their state school intake since the mid-1990s.

Al-Jazeera talk

The Al-Jazeera network's Chief Investigative Correspondent, Yosri Fouda, addressed the Old Theatre on 2 October, in a debate entitled 'Al-Jazeera - A Different Voice in the World'.

Fouda, who hosts a Panorama-style investigative programme on Al-Jazeera, spoke to a packed audience consisting of journalists, academics and students on how the network had been "controversial from day one."

He talked of the challenges facing the channel, including intimidation from governments around the world, the smearing of its reputation particularly in Egypt and having a target audience in the Middle East where 50 percent of the population is illiterate.

Fouda also suggested that Al-Jazeera's reporting provides an alternative perspective on the same event to that of other international media outlets such as the BBC and CNN.

In a question and answer session, Fouda was faced with several challenging questions including whether it was possible for Al-Jazeera to break through to the American audience, why Al-Jazeera had not been successful in bringing about empirical political changes in the Arab world and whether the channel makes the 'Clash of Civilisations' more or less likely.

In his answers, Fouda was defensive of Al-Jazeera's minimal reporting on the Qatar government, stating there is "no media outlet in the world which is 100 percent free." He also added, "it takes time to educate your masses," thus defending Al-Jazeera against the charge of being biased towards Qatar, where it is based.

Fatima Manji

NUS Extra

Over 1200 NUS 'Extra' cards have been sold to LSE students since they went on sale. Online purchases accounted for 302 of these whilst three quarters were distributed in the Quad.

LSE SU Treasurer Joel Kenrick said that the number was "well above expectations."

Chris Lam

LGBT Officer Quits

The LSE Students' Union (SU) has announced that Alexandra Murphy, the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gendered) officer, has decided to step down from her post for personal reasons.

The elections for the new LGBT officer will be held in week 4, at the same time as the other Michaelmas term elections. Murphy has told *The Beaver* that the LGBT officer "is a very worthwhile role given the presence of the gay community in the School and London in general."

Wil Barber, the SU Returning Officer, who is in charge of the forthcoming elections, told *The Beaver* that he hopes that this year the position is well contested, so that there can be no question about the credibility of the winner. Other vacant positions to fill during the next elections are of General Course Officer and Postgraduate Officer.

Danielle Priestley

Finnish PM on the future of Europe



Finnish PM Vanhanen at the LSE

Laura Coombes

The future of Europe lies in "innovation, innovation and innovation" according to Finland's Prime Minister (PM), Matti Vanhanen. He was addressing the LSE at a talk entitled, 'The European Union and the Challenge of Globalisation'.

The Finnish PM's visit last Thursday marks the beginning of a series of talks organised by the LSE European Institute and Financial Times Business, which will see the Old Theatre opening its doors to a number of influential figures.

Finland currently holds the EU presidency and will be in charge of policy until December.

Vanhanen's message for his six months in control was a stark one; essentially, in the era

of globalisation, "the economy and economics rule; they are what drives the world forward."

He warned against complacency. "Globalisation places huge demands on our competitiveness - there is no hiding place, no shelter from competition."

At the same time, the PM was keen to emphasise that globalisation should not be seen as a threat, but as a 'force for good', pointing to its success in "lifting people out of poverty" in Indochina.

Acknowledging that the EU "cannot compete with cheaper labour", Vanhanen highlighted the need to find new products and new ways of producing them. He insisted that competitiveness is compatible with environmental policy.

Drawing on the success of

the EU external trade policy, Vanhanen suggested that we need similar unity in energy.

Discussing reliance on Russian supplies, he observed, "Do you think that the EU will have more influence with Russia if we act together, or as separate member states, each with our own agenda? I think that the answer is obvious."

The PM reiterated his commitment to enlargement, which has "taken European stability to new frontiers", with or without ratification of the Constitutional Treaty, welcoming the addition of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey to the "European family."

Both the Italian and Greek primeministers are scheduled visit the LSE during this term.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

The real right to choose

In response to last week's article *Right to choose but wrong to kill* Zoe Sullivan and Alexandra Vincenti argue for the right of women to take control of their reproduction.



As individuals and students live in a culture of choice and mutual respect, an achievement that has taken years of toil to accomplish. Whatever a person's opinion concerning the viability of life, foetal autonomy and the morality of society there should be always the fundamental right of all women to control decisions concerning their bodies and lives.

The article, 'Right to choose but wrong to kill' attempts to make a political point that is irrelevant to the practicalities of life. It is futile to constantly debate the moral or legal right and status of an unborn child when there can never be agreement. We must seek to accomplish a tangible and realistic situation where the rights of women are placed firmly above all theoretical, emotive

and philosophical debates.

Renewed interest in the reduction of the time limit is not due to "enlightened" attitudes or reliable medical research but is in fact due to political wrangling and power struggles between the major UK political parties. The reality of current medical thinking squarely favours a woman's right to choose, demonstrated by the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG), and the Royal College of Nursing support for maintaining the current time limit of 24 weeks.

Furthermore many of the comments upon which the article rested were misleading, inaccurate and stink of the highly emotive white-wash typically used by the 'pro-life' lobby to avoid acknowledging the centrality of a woman's right to choose.

First, the claim that abortion and breast cancer are inextricably linked is frankly irresponsible. After researching the connection leading cancer research charities have all concluded that there is no positive correlation. Furthermore, the original research was funded by the anti-choice group 'Life'. The RCOG commenting on their report found it to have no reliable foundation and claimed it would lead to unnecessary anxiety amongst women.

The reality of current medical thinking squarely favours a woman's right to choose

Second, the decision to terminate a pregnancy on the grounds of foetal abnormality is an excruciatingly difficult one to make, and should rest solely in the hands of those who will have to care for the child throughout its life. Some seemingly banal or minor physical abnormalities are known to be in fact symptomatic of more serious physical and mental problems.

Third, it is naïve to suggest that abortion is an expression of societal break-down. Research by the LSE has demonstrated that we are in fact living in a time of excellent sexual health knowledge

and awareness of contraception. The legalisation of abortion was ranked at the top of many factors that have contributed to the modern and progressive fabric of our society. In reality unwanted pregnancies have occurred throughout history, and are not a modern pandemic, used by women in lieu of contraception. By reducing the time limit, or criminalising abortion, one will only drive women to seek out dangerous backstreet or DIY abortions.

Lastly, to suggest that 98% of abortions occur due to social reasons is to trivialise the complex and diverse reasons why women may choose to terminate their pregnancies. To treat such a difficult decision in such a flippant way is to show a complete lack of respect and caring for the mental and physical stress women go through when facing such a choice.

Therefore while the LSE Students' Union (SU) has a proud history of engaging with current affairs that effect 'students as students', and of having a progressive outlook towards such issues, LSESU policy is created and employed to serve, represent and protect its students. Central to its dedication is the protection and furtherance of student welfare. This is ensured through providing resources and information that students can choose to access and use in

the best way they see fit. SU policy is most importantly practical not political, as such it is designed to benefit students rather than being dictated by sensationalist political overtures.

The LSESU reflects the opinion of the majority of UK women and the very real needs of women on our campus by providing a 'Right to Choose fund' that is in line with current British legislation. This offers support and information on a woman's options and confidential counselling to support her through this difficult time. It also provides monetary assistance, regardless of the decision a woman makes on the future of her pregnancy. For example, the money may be used for an abortion in a private clinic to minimise the mental and physical distress that she may encounter, or alternatively used to cover unexpected costs during or after pregnancy (ie maternity clothing, costs of education etc.)

Associations the Union is affiliated to, such as Abortion Rights, all reflect the Union's policy of placing decisions in our students' hands. Unlike the 'pro-life' lobby the Union is not here as a political tool to judge or sway those who seek out help and support. But it is here as a neutral body that represents and protects our society of freedom, choice and mutual respect of our society.

Is poverty history?

Politicians and rock stars have left their white wristbands on the big stage, but we need to keep the momentum going to eradicate poverty, argues Louise Robinson

A year ago they appeared, first on the wrists of volunteers for pressure groups. Then A-list celebs. A few weeks later, every school kid in the country racked up many hours trawling through E-bay to bid for one. They were the fashion accessory of the year. Geldof had one, Bono had one. Even I had one. Everyone was whipped into a frenzy for the coveted Make Poverty History white wristbands, and poverty was, quite rightly, put on the political agenda for 2005. A year later, you could assume that poverty has successfully been eradicated, as it rarely enters the political jargon that MPs throw into the media arena.

Congratulations to those pop stars who rocked out at Live Aid 2005 - you really did 'feed the world', and well done to each and every one of you who bought the bands. Poverty doesn't exist anymore! If only.

On the 16th October, a speaker event at the LSE will detail the progress and



achievements since the hype in 2005. Rather than a two-minute 'well done, we did it', I expect that the tone of the meeting will be more 'there's a lot more to happen.' With the absolute urgent need for continued action, and still huge leaps to be made in relation to trade conditions, third world debt and aid offered by the West, it seems incredulous that poverty as a political issue has fallen by the wayside.

The 17th October makes the end to a month of 'Standing up against Poverty' - organised by the Global Call to Action Against Poverty. During this month, this coalition network has urged people to wear the white wristbands

Are politicians now too busy cycling for the cameras to remember the poverty problems they promised to resolve?

that they queued up to obtain when the paparazzi were celeb spotting them. Unfortunately, I haven't noticed so many out and about this year.

As a very climate conscious person I am delighted that 'Green is the new black', but what happened to the white of hope for the end of poverty? Are politicians now too busy cycling for the cameras to remember the poverty problems they promised to resolve? Perhaps it's just not as cool as when the streets were thronged with people singing along to Annie Lennox and the Scissor Sisters.

Live 8 was fun, and attracted a lot of media attention to a very worthy cause. But now we need action. Societies on campus and beyond must work in the common interest to reignite the flames of justice for the world's poor. I'm not saying that the climate awareness should be thwarted (anyone who knows me would think the idea ludicrous), but I will echo Monbiot in saying that there is a direct and inextricable link between climate awareness and making poverty history.

Climate chaos only adds to the poverty problem, as crops fail in droughts and floods. Both are caused by the economic powerbrokers. The losers lose out further, as the domestic politics of the west supersedes the urgent need for a two pronged attack on both climatic disaster, and the injustice of poverty. As politicians cling onto the fastest moving bandwagon, we lose sight of the ultimate goals that we desperately need to focus on. We need to make poverty history, without forgetting that the planet itself may soon become just that. We really must keep momentum rolling for these campaigns, act now, and continue to do so, even if Geldof has lost his white band down the back of the couch.

People and Planet will be holding a speaker event - 16th October, 6.30pm D302 - UK NGOs

17th October, White Band Day 4 - look for events and stalls on campus!

Beaver

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If you have written three or more articles for *The Beaver* and your name does not appear in the Collective, please email:

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and you will be added to the list in next week's paper. *The Beaver* is available in alternative formats.

The views and opinions expressed in the *Beaver* are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors or the LSE Students' Union

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

the Beaver

Established 1949 - Issue 645

State school admissions

Steps in the right direction as the School increases its state school intake

Revelations this week that the School increased its admission intake from state schools are certainly promising, and a move in the right direction. Yet with the School still falling short of the official Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) benchmark and appearing below the average for London universities, this year's results need to be used as the foundations upon which a much more concerted effort to encourage state school applications can be built.

A 3% rise, while deserving of appreciation, is simply not enough. The LSE's current schemes to widen acceptances need to be further extended with an emphasis placed on innovative ideas and extended support. 'Pilot schemes', such as the one the School currently conducts for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, should shed the 'pilot' from their designations.

Further research into the socio-economic backgrounds of students being admitted from clearly disadvantaged communities, would provide a greater insight into the success of schemes that claim to 'widen participation'. At present it might well be that the increase in state school admissions, is only an increase in state school students from middle class backgrounds, hardly true evidence of increased participation.

A step back reveals the problem is not one limited to the LSE alone. Rather, all Russell Group Universities subscribe to a similar trend, clearly revealing the existence of a much wider social issue. Prospective students could be discouraged from applying to such universities for any number of reasons including the increasing costs of a university education, a lack of confidence, negative attitudes towards higher education in their communities or intimidating stereotypes that are typical of elite universities.

The latter is one that we - the School, staff and students - must jointly work towards addressing.

Leaving university
Imperial's leaving of the University of London could set a popular trend

As Imperial College announces its departure from the University of London, this is an opportune moment for the LSE to clearly review its own affiliation with the seemingly ill-fated institution.

Questions have long been asked about whether membership of the University of London is really worth the approximate £300,000 a year, when the sum would arguably be more effectively spent on providing better facilities on campus, specifically for LSE students.

The issue is a complex one, whilst access to services such as the Senate House Library and the University of London (UL) sports facilities are important to many students at the LSE, others see the UL and the association with universities such as Goldsmith's and King's, as excess baggage rather than adding value to their university experience.

Many have argued the reputation of the London School of Economics alone, is more than satisfactory when they are awarded their degrees. With such polarized views, this paper encourages the School to engage in comprehensive consultation with the student body, before embarking on its own trip.

Union General Meeting

The Union's political-debate flagship gets off to a shaky start

The first Union General Meeting (UGM) of the year, held this week, was regrettably a poor initiation for the many new students attempting to step into this university's proud political traditions. The elementary process of electing an individual to chair the weekly proceedings extended over an unproductive 35 minutes.

Whilst the UGM will always retain its humorous streak, squandering the one precious hour in which the Union's elected representatives are to be held to account is juvenile, and detrimental to student democracy.

With numbers at the UGM unspectacular, student apathy will only be further fuelled should issues and motions not be adequately discussed.

While the Students' Union will (and should) always remain extremely proud of its UGM being the last such remaining weekly meeting in the country, such pride will be in vain should the discouragement of true political debate and participation continue in coming weeks.

Letters to the Editor

The Beaver offers all readers the right to reply to anything that appears in the paper. Letters should be sent to thebeaver.editor@lse.ac.uk and should be no longer than 250 words. All letters must be received by 3pm on the Sunday prior to publication. The Beaver reserves the right to edit letters prior to publication.



Better argument

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to Sam Burke's article 'Right to Choose but Wrong to Kill?'. The author is quite right in saying that the "most progressive solution to unwanted pregnancies would be to work at eliminating the causes of abortion, namely poverty, irresponsible approaches to sex, lack of education, etc". It's a shame he didn't write more about that, rather than - as always in this debate - pointing fingers and accusing women of killing their children. Let's hope the debate in the forthcoming weeks will give rise to a more positive and constructive approach to this serious and complex issue.

Yours Sincerely,

Jennifer Hilly
MSc Gender and Social Policy

Exam Scripts

Dear Sir,

Although it is the right of every student to request and receive their personal school file using the Data Protection Act (James Caspell's letter to the Beaver 26/09/06), I am concerned that there is a rumour that by obtaining your file, you can, firstly, get examination feedback and, secondly, gain supporting evidence for an appeal. There is a suggestion that such a request is a secret that the school wishes to conceal from students in order to stop them using a regulation loophole. The comments in your file concerning your exams are not designed for the benefit of the student. Rather they can be as short and vague as 'good', 'average' or 'poor'.

Furthermore, your scripts are not included in the file, so it is impossible to tell which essay question the comments refer to. The grounds for appealing your results at LSE are extremely narrow, since it is expressly forbidden to question the academic integrity of the examiners. Therefore, although you will discover your individual essay marks, you will not be able to use these to submit an appeal based on the fact that there were mark discrepancies between the two examiners. I feel it is important that students know the reality of the DPA, as it is but irresponsible to give false hope to many students who are already disappointed and very distressed by their results.

Alexandra Vincenti
LSESU Education & Welfare
Sabbatical

What racism?

Dear Sir,

This is in response to a letter published in the last edition of the Beaver entitled 'Bigots at LSE'. The letter ends with the question "Why do I even pay fees to the LSE when it is seemingly filled with a bunch of bigots?". Whilst the author comments on a relevant issue, his tone is far too pessimistic. It seems to me to be a cause not for concern but for amusement that those who hold

racist and xenophobic views have been reduced to writing on the walls of toilets, because honestly there is no other room for the views that they hold. Those who scribble hate messages are so ashamed of what they do, that they have to do it under the guise of anonymity and in the last place anyone would seek a rational and intellectual debate. As a student at the LSE over the last year, I have not witnessed a single instance where the views expressed on the walls of toilets have been aired openly. Whilst the LSE remains one of the most political universities in the world, the proponents of xenophobia on campus are in such an overwhelming minority that they cannot even begin to express their views in public, for fear of the immense reaction they would face. Whilst there may be bad apples in the basket, the idea that the basket has gone bad is inaccurate and unnecessarily pessimistic. We mustn't lose faith in ourselves this easily.

Yours,
Om Dhumatkar
International History Dept.
LSE Postgraduate Law (LLM)

Legal Weapons

Dear Sir,

It is understandable that the school is reluctant to release figures regarding contributions from defence companies when they can expect such one-dimensional coverage.

Joel Kenrick's suggestion that arms manufacturers in some way undermine human rights stands out as an especially puzzling example. As unsavoury as it may seem to the layman, weapons are necessary to uphold human rights throughout the world with peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.

Oppressors and war criminals will always find a way to get their hands on weapons. There is an alarming number of weapons in circulation and we should focus on cracking down on illegal arms traffickers. In attacking homegrown, strongly regulated defence companies, you are picking the wrong fight.

Whether equipment from the companies in question happens to have been used in enacting this or that foreign policy is beside the point. You can disagree with individual policy but not with the fact that if we want to continue defending human rights worldwide we're going to keep needing the equipment to do so.

Sincerely,
Ari Helgason

Bullshit's great

Dear Sir,

I am writing with regard to Daniel Yates's review of Frankfurt's 'On Bullshit'. Daniel Yates claims that, first, the style of writing undertaken by analytic philosophy is dull and that, second, the methodology of analytic philosophy - which Daniel Yates calls 'that ultra-conservative province of classical reason' - fails to provide 'explanatory depth'.

In reply to the first statement, clarity and precision of thought does not entail dullness: it is perfectly possible for a piece of writing to be both precise and interesting (as evidenced by Hume, Popper etc.).

With regard to second statement, reason and evidence are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for formulating hypotheses that enjoy explanatory power over their targets. Any hypothesis that is logically impossible or contradicted by evidence has no explanatory power. Likewise, a hypothesis that is logically valid and enjoys the greatest degree of confirmation over rival hypotheses enjoys explanatory power over its target (e.g. Darwinism).

Daniel Yates complains that analytic philosophy is 'Teethumblingly methodical, painful in its elaboration of every possible [...] alternative'. However, elaborating on possibilities is often exactly what is needed in order to arrive at 'explanatory depth' (as he calls it). If it's possible for any one of several hypotheses to explain a natural or social phenomenon, then further research is needed in order to determine which of the hypotheses (if any) is the actual explanation. Only by adherence to logic and evidence can genuine explanations be formulated.

With warm regards,

Andrew Goldfinch
3rd year BSc Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method

We shall clean

Dear Sir,

In light of the "Bigots at LSE" letter in last week's edition of the Beaver, the Estates Division would like to ask for your assistance in reporting offensive graffiti.

The current regime for inspecting the School's properties is the utilisation of building stewards and cleaners who make regular checks of all areas. Taking into consideration the number of buildings that make up the campus there will always be a small time interval between identifying, reporting and taking the relevant corrective action. In the meantime Estates Division would appreciate if you as an LSE student share in the responsibility of reporting graffiti by using the help desk request form found on the following link: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/estatesDivision/serviceRequest/serviceRequest_maintenance.htm. Please continue to report blockages and leakages on the emergency help line ext 2444. Additional notices will be put up in toilets notifying users of the help desk web link.

Graffiti removal is given the highest priority and immediate action is taken by Estates to remove it. In this case the offensive graffiti was removed from R1 (gents' toilet) as soon as the location was identified. Sadly more graffiti was found in the same area the next day and again it was cleaned off.

Estates Division would like to thank you in advance for your help and cooperation in this matter.
Vivien Henderson
Estates Help Desk Manager

ELECTIONS



Dear Sir,

No matter what your politics last week's Union General Meeting (UGM) was a farce. Forty minutes was wasted electing the chair and vice-chair with the rest squandered on a vote of no confidence in C&S. It's no surprise 'normal' students keep away. Regulars waste precious UGM time talking about themselves instead of issues that matter to students. I doubt the few new faces at this week's UGM will be back after that exhibition.

I used to love the UGM, but lately it just hasn't seemed the same. Sure, last year there was the ridiculous, but there was also the sublime and we used to get through most of the motions. This week's charade illustrated how in need of a shake up the LSESU is. Looking round on Thursday I could even see a number of former LSE finalists lurking in the corners. We need fresh faces and new ideas at the UGM not desperate hangers on.

That is why I believe this year's Michaelmas elections are so important. With the nominations opening this Thursday these are the most important elections in determining the political year at LSE. Will it just be a continuation of the downward spiral? I don't want to see that happen. I want to see people who actually give a damn about the Court of Governors and not just the same group riding the electoral carousel in search of Sabbatical positions in Lent Term. All the positions in Michaelmas are important and need people who take them seriously.

That's where you come in. My role in the SU means I can neither vote nor stand, only observe. So only you can help my wish come true by helping yourself. It doesn't matter that you've never done anything like this before - a simple message, a few society endorsements and a lot of pavement pounding are all you really need. And it's what the Union really needs.

Will Barber
Returning Officer

FEATURES

Politics/Law/Business/Careers

thebeaver.features@lse.ac.uk

David Cameron
specialProfile:
Yosri
FoudaSex in the
UniverCity

Eyes to the left

Andy
Hallett

They say all good things must come to an end, and much like Anthony Blair and his erstwhile "Labour" party, my time as *Eyes to the Left* may be coming to an end. The Editors having seen fit to inject new blood into Features I am thus in the process of pondering all I have learnt whilst writing for the Beaver over the last year. Much of it is dispiriting, yet there is cause for optimism, cause enough for justifying the writing of this very column.

An extremely important thing I have learnt is that the Left can be as conservative as the Right, if not more so. If, for example, one dares to point out that trade unions are not left-wing in the sense I understand the phrase, and never have been, you are liable to stir up a hornet's nest of patronising middle-class union defending. Far too often, received truths are not challenged, and thus become consolidated. The most glaring examples of this are the incredibly dense people, many here at LSE, who still think the party of PFIs, Iraq, top-up fees and the like is socialist. Since the establishment Left is Labour, Labour manages to get something of a monopoly on those who call themselves progressive, thus wasting an enormous amount of talent to the service of lies and waste.

Perhaps the other key thing I have learnt, mainly through my interactions with so-called Marxists and the like at various School events, is how unpleasant and aggressive far too many on the Left, especially those on the far-Left, can be. Stalinists and defenders of tyranny, they condemn all who point out that shooting the workers is less progressive than giving them jobs as "fascists" or "members of the bourgeoisie". In their own way they are as dangerous as the BNP, and they give everyone else who is left of centre a bad name. Most damning of all, they are intellectually stunted, being the victims of an ideology which never admits of fault or addition – the antithesis of what I believe the Left should be.

Unfortunately this devotion to what is seen to be Left is rather dangerous, as the appearance becomes more important than the actual substance. At the LSE this is nakedly manifest in the dozens of students who call themselves "progressive" or some other meaningless description but do very little to actually make the world, even in a modest way, a better place. It's easy to talk about the Living Wage campaign, quite another to actually attend meetings, petition, rally and generally act to bring one about. It's even easier to term oneself "green" and then jet off like the rest of us come the summer holidays. Even *The Beaver*, a self-consciously liberal piece, will sell advertising space to pretty much anyone, regardless of their appalling record in corporate behaviour.

But I do not, of course, wish to seem overtly hostile to the Left, especially at LSE. Much good work has been done, and indeed continues to be done – look

at the campaign against the grotesque Peter Sutherland buying his way into the upper echelons of the School. Rather, I wish more of us were not quite so high and mighty when it comes to behaviour or views we would not endorse. We could learn much from the Right, who at LSE are generally far friendlier and easier to discuss things with than the often obstinate Left. We will get nowhere if we resort to Dave Spart-style rants when the Right are so eloquent and polite.

However, LSE is somewhat removed from what is termed, nebulously "the real world". There most people are very stupid and scared of change, hence their continued support for the big two political parties. An LSE education in amateur politics should equip us all to be able to go to the electorate and trick them as the political class are apt to do – for their own benefit of course. Writing this column has been a small attempt to address the general intellectual conservatism of the populace, from whence we all came. I have stimulated debate and, I hope, inspired readers to look at things from a different perspective, regardless of Left/Right tags all too easily assigned. This would not have been possible in "the real world". To me that suggests that world should be altered to suit our views, and through this column I may have made a minuscule move in that direction. So thank you for reading it, and encouraging the move. ■

The right approach

Charles
Laurence

History is unforgiving, it brings a cold cruel clarity to events. Its ability to expose hypocrisy, lies and excuses by definition always comes too late. But that does not make it redundant. After the horrors of the Holocaust the world determined that such a thing could 'never again' happen. This principle was enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The basic point being that human rights are for everyone and our obligation to uphold them should not be affected by irrelevant factors such as distance or race. The idea was that we had learnt from History.

This principle is in many ways unenforceable, the abuses of rights that occur all around the world are so persistent and widespread that there is no power that could stop them all. And often even with the best will in the world, there is no practical way to stop it, for example in the nuclear armed prison state of North Korea. But occasionally there are crimes so heinous that there are no practical reasons not to act, only excuses. The genocide in Rwanda made the cruelest mockery of the 'never again' dictum. Back then there were 'practical considerations', the world was told that 'peace' must be restored before intervention could happen, could it legally be classed as 'genocide?' we were asked, the issue was kicked around then booted into the legalistic long grass.

The moral intuition that we are obligated to protect all humans, had not died. In fact the hand wringing of the West was the best evidence for it. We tried to protect ourselves from the basic truths of the situation, because we knew that accepting these truths would obligate us to act. The legal niceties and 'practical' concerns, were enough to prevent any action being taken. By the end of it all 800,000 had been shot and hacked to death. In the unerring eyes of history that is the only statistic that matters. The excuses that felt plausible at the time now sound as hollow as they always were, the generation that went before us knows that they failed in their duty. Not just the leaders, but the opinion formers and the electorates who failed to provide the politicians with an incentive to stop the bloodshed.

And now we come to Darfur where 2 million people have been forcibly driven from their home by the Janjaweed a force set up by the Deputy Prime Minister of Sudan and trained by the Sudanese security forces. 200,000 have been killed in the process. Again the same hand wringing is taking place, the US Congress has declared what is happening in Darfur as genocide. The US Administration has also used the fateful term, despite a secret memo urging them not to as it would mean having to do something. The UN has come short of calling it genocide and in this they may be right, the cycle of killing is more complicated than one race trying to eliminate another, it may be more accurately described as 'wicked murder on a huge scale' as Hilton Dawson of the British Parliament's group on Sudan called it. Its definition is hardly relevant to the women who live in fear of rape each time they leave their home or to the fathers who have to dig shallow graves for their families by the side of their refugee camps.

We are allowing semantics, once again, to get in the way of doing the right thing. The situation has come at a critical point of international relations, both the rule of international law and the rule of American power seem discredited and fragile (unlike in back in 1994 in Rwanda). And, in this context, the world powers are making some effort to rectify the situation. The UN is currently trying to replace the pitiful African Union force of 8,000 (when a UN force is an improvement, the situation must be dire). And there have been economic sanctions imposed by the US amongst others. Whilst commendable, none of this has brought an end to the humanitarian disaster. When the judgment is made on this sorry chapter, will any of the actions we either took as individuals and our leaders took in our names excuse the fact that once again, we knew, and once again we did as good as nothing? I doubt it. The simple fact is that if we allow ourselves to muddle ineffectively through yet another man-made catastrophe, we will be just as culpable as every generation that has gone before; History will make sure of that.

This will be my last column. Thanks to my editors and readers, particularly those who have been so forthright in challenging what I've had to say, and good luck to my successor. ■

Ed. Thank you to Charles and Andy for their invaluable contribution to Features. Next week - meet our new columnists!

Editor's Blog



There has been much discussion at the LSE over the past couple of weeks about the possibility of a Blair School of Government at the LSE. Some think it is not appropriate because a living politician should not get involved in educational institutions. Others disagree because they hate him. We agree that Blair is the wrong choice to be honoured in this way. Instead the LSE should be unveiling the Bartlet School of Government.

Josiah Bartlet is President of the USA on the US television series *The West Wing*. He is a man that has established connections with the LSE after he studied here and received a Masters and a Doctorate in Economics. He is also a Nobel Prize winner in the field of economics. He represents, for many people, the ideal liberal president. Endowed with a fierce intellect, he was a great personal integrity, and a sense of humour. He is also a great man with huge compassion for those less fortunate than himself.

As President of the US, Bartlet accomplished many things that have made life better for the average man in America. These included: the granting of an amnesty to illegal immigrants from the Americas, appointing the first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice and first female Chief Justice, negotiating a peace settlement between Israel and Palestine, creating millions of new jobs, supporting alternative energy, orchestrating a Social Security reform plan and balancing the budget.

LSE should grasp this opportunity. Although some may sneer that Bartlet is only a fictional character on a now defunct show it is what he represents that makes him an ideal choice for our school of government. He is a symbol for what LSE students can achieve. We are in a hugely fortunate position to be studying at such a prestigious university. One where it is possible to make a big difference to the world around us for the better. Bartlet represents this hope. He is also untainted, a feat a real-world politician would not be able to achieve.

The actor behind Bartlet, Martin Sheen, has an activist record that many an LSE student would be proud of. Arrested on four separate occasions whilst protesting against the US military, most recently he was arrested for trespassing at an anti-militarisation protest at California's Vandenberg Air Force base in 2000.

As numerous West Wing fans mourn the end of such a successful show we need to find a way to commemorate one of LSE's finest Alumni. ■

From bomb to ballot box

Bassel Salah examines the challenges facing the current Palestinian Authority and prospects for the future of Hamas

Since its formation in 1987, Hamas has conducted numerous social, political, and military actions. Its popularity stems in part from its welfare and social services to Palestinians in the occupied territories, including school and hospital construction. The group devotes much of its annual budget to an extensive social services network, running many relief and education programs, funds schools, orphanages, mosques, healthcare clinics, soup kitchens, and sports leagues. These programs are viewed variously as part of a sincere social development agenda, an integrated Parastate policy, as propaganda and recruitment exercises, or both. Hamas also funds a number of other charitable activities; these include religious institutions, medical facilities, and social needs of the area's residents. Hamas is also well regarded by Palestinians for its efficiency compared to Fatah.

Hamas candidates appeal to Palestinian voters as the alternative to the perceived inaction and weakness of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority leadership. Candidates promised improved socio-economic conditions for Palestinian families, and greater social services. They also pledged an end to the "Israeli occupation," the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and the return of all Palestinian refugees. In the 2006 election campaign, Hamas candidates and leadership refused to disavow their commitment to an "armed struggle" against Israel, and recognise Israel's right to exist, and the precepts of the Hamas Charter. At the same time,



ment later formed the first non-Fatah government after 2006 elections, this engendered considerable controversy, as Western governments refused to deal with a group that they had formally listed as a terrorist organisation. This has caused an economic crisis for the Palestinian Authority (PA), as these governments withheld the foreign aid that is the main source of the PA's income. While these developments are primarily a part of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they are seen as a setback to the strategy of participation in democratic elections. It is also important to note that Hamas has proven itself capable of recognising and respecting certain boundaries. For instance, Hamas has refrained from engaging in terror abroad, has not attacked Americans in the Palestinian Authority, nor has it openly identified with al-Qaeda terrorism. Hamas knows the red lines that exist in the murky world of real politics. However, given the problems facing the PA, Hamas in its present form is destined to fail. If it does not transform itself, it will collapse under the weight of the PA's accumulated debts, which will inevitably, ensue Palestinian public dissatisfaction with its inability to deliver a better living standard.

Hamas is fighting challenges on all fronts. It has inherited \$1.3 billion in debt. Israel has cut off \$55 million in monthly tax transfers while the United States, Europe and other countries have cut aid to the government unless it recognises the Jewish State and disarms. Protests over unpaid government salaries are festering.

Banks are refusing to deal with the Palestinian Authority, fearing lawsuits by the United States which has prohibited any commercial dealings with Hamas government. Even the organisation is entangled in internal struggle with Fatah nowadays.

That being said, there is evidence that participation in electoral politics can lead to changes in core values and beliefs among some Islamists, particularly by middle-generation Islamists who spearheaded the movement's entry into electoral contests for political power. Some types of participation were more likely to trigger value change than others, particularly when Islamists have the incentive and opportunity to break out of the insular networks of movement politics and engage in sustained cooperation with secular groups in pursuit of democratic reform. This tendency, however, is limited by intra-group dynamics, and conservative old guard leaders are generally resistant to any redefinition of the group's historic mission. The social conservatism of the base constituencies, in particular—especially in rural, tribal areas—has also limited or blocked the political evolution in the group on key issues. The result is that revisionist opinion is hemmed in by more conservative voices in the political organization, while new trends with a more explicit revisionist agenda have a very limited mass base.

Hamas will fight to stay. If it fails, it will be a severe blow to Islamic movements in the Arab world who seek power through the ballot boxes. Hamas' indulgence in daily politics and eco-

nomics provides the chance for the organization to understand the pros and cons of ruling. It seems until now that they don't have a clear political platform, yet since they felt they never needed to. They sensed they could hold on to their hard line positions because they themselves were surprised with their landslide victory.

On the peace process, Hamas has proven to be an organization that has always said that it will abide by the desires of the Palestinian people. And if the

Hamas will fight to stay. If it fails, it will be a severe blow to Islamic movements in the Arab world who seek power through the ballot boxes

majority of the Palestinian people want a two-state solution and believe that the best way to achieve that is through negotiations, a considerable cluster within Hamas do feel that the Palestinian people are the ones who suffer as a result of any military action that the Palestinians carry out because the Israeli response is much more stronger. They would have to change if they want to succeed and prove that they could lead the people and the government better than Fatah had.

Hamas is an ideological

organisation in nature. Nevertheless, it proved at the same time and with respect to current political dynamics that it can be pragmatic. Though Hamas has rejected in the past Western notions, including nation state and democracy, we tend to find that it is embracing these notions today and making the maximum use of it to achieve the organisation's interest. From Hamas who previously refused to accept the mere existence of Israel, we can now see signs of establishing a truce and even accepting the Arab peace initiative, which supports a two-state solution. Another factor which will determine the future of this organisation is the current debate between the old guard and the young reformers, which did not produce definitive results until today.

Only if the temperature is lowered throughout the region, can the momentum of the Islamic right within Hamas be slowed and, someday, reversed. Unfortunately, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have raised that temperature to the boiling point. So has the long-term American military build-up in the Persian Gulf and Central Asia. So have the proclamations from President Bush about "Islamofascism." So has the Israeli policy of expanding settlements and building a giant barrier that virtually annexes huge swaths of the West Bank for Greater Israel. All of these policies cause Islamist sympathies to grow, and out of them bubble recruits not only for organisations like Hamas, but for Al Qaeda-style groups. ■



Given the problems...Hamas in its present form is destined to fail. If it does not transform itself it will collapse under the weight of the Palestinian Authority's accumulated debts

a number of Hamas candidates did make pragmatic statements, indicating that they might deal with Israelis in certain situations, or via a third party.

Having said that, it is important to note that when the move-

David Cameron: You

Erica Gornall saw a little history repeating at this year's Conservative Party Conference

Is this a repeat of 1997? I think so. Cameron's posing washing the dishes and pushing baby buggies around various shopping malls has been heralded as an astonishing new venture for the Tories. The young, hip leader of the previously stagnant right has thrown off his blue tie in favour of the dishcloth. Yet is this really a progressive move for the Tories, or just a shadow of Tony Blair's vision back in 1997?

The accession of David Cameron marks a 'new conservatism,' an idea remarkably similar to 'new labour'. Like Blair in 1997, Cameron is having to contend with the many factions within his own party. Only a few months after his electoral success, *The Times* reported that 'dissident Labour MPs threaten to undermine Blair's plea for unity'. This tension between leader and party highlights an increasingly common phenomena in politics today. With the rise of marketing in politics, where image and slogans dominate, it is personality and not party that gains support of the voting public. After all, 'New Labour', although constructed from Anthony Giddens' 'Third Way', was put into momentum by Blair (an individual). Similarly, 'New Conservatism' is a brain child of Cameron and his allies and not the party. This is expressed in recent polls where the question tends towards 'which person can you see as the next



Parties suffering from stagnation can only rely on personality for the voters to have the incentive to bother to vote

Prime Minister?" This results in further superficiality on the political stage on both sides, which makes them sound remarkably similar.

Cameron is no more left or right wing than Blair, despite their party differences. Ideologies are now

the thing of the past as conservatism and socialism are branded and re-branded according to the present wish of the voters. This week's Conservative conference highlighted the extent to which Cameron is being sucked into New Labour's jargon. Commentator Philip Webster remarked that Cameron "will say that while Tony Blair explained his priorities in three words — education, education, education — he could do it in three letters: NHS." What does this actually mean? He has changed words into letters, on the assumption that the shorter and snappier his speech, the more success he'll have.

Those who fear the failure of the conservatives should not worry. After the disasters of the summer, the Labour party (a la Conservatives pre-1997) are pre-occupied fighting over the last scraps of their ever-diminishing hold of the UK. Cameron is no different to Blair. He believes in the NHS (probably more so than the PM, as his son visits an NHS hospital daily), wants more women in the Commons, and this week even announced that he can promise tax cuts. However, parties suffering from stagnation can only rely on personality for the voters to have the incentive to bother to vote. In 1997, it was the new young face of Tony Blair that attracted such numbers to vote for Labour. Apart from differences over issues such as Europe (which isn't even party political anyway), both the Tories and Labour are merging into one, as their policies struggle to keep up with the latest opinion poll.

The result is that many 'floater voters' will be tempted by this new brand of conservatism under the illusion that it is new and different from the other parties. It all looks good for a Conservative Party who have been itching for that taste of power. Let's just hope that they and their new voters are not too surprised when they realise they have only travelled back in time, to 1997, when New Labour lost its major principles (such as their links with the trade unions) in the pursuit of a rise in opinion polls. Are not the Conservatives, too, relinquishing their principles for the sake of temporary customer satisfaction? The only difference is that Cameron is new and Blair's old. Like electrical goods, it is only natural that the voters will pick the newer model of toaster that hasn't burned them yet. ■



An ocean of dif

Ben Gianforti discusses the similarities between David Cameron and Barack Obama

Their backgrounds could not be any more different. One is a direct descendant of a distinguished English pedigree, educated at Eton and Oxford; the other is the son of a poor Kenyan immigrant and a white Kansas woman from modest means. The former is David Cameron, the new leader of the Conservative Party; the other is Barack Obama, the junior Democratic senator from Illinois. Obama is a man of milestones: the first African American to become editor of the Harvard Law Review and just the third black senator since Reconstruction (currently the only one); perhaps the embodiment of the American Dream.

What could these two men possibly have in common? They are both possessed with the youthful optimism and effortless charisma that come along once in a political generation. At 39 and 45 respectively, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama are often compared to the most revered of young, telegenic politicians, John F. Kennedy, who became President at the tender age

of 43. But in many ways these two men have inherited a significantly heavier mantle.

Both are rising stars in parties that have been in opposition for a decade a piece unlike JFK who benefited to some extent from the postwar Democratic majority in Congress that would not end until 1994. Tethered to old ways, traditional interest groups and uninspired leaders, the Conservatives and the Democrats have been largely stagnant in recent election cycles. Additionally, today's political environment is much more hostile than it was in the early 1960s because of a bloodthirsty media lying in wait for the next gaffe, scandal or misstep. Mr. Cameron's supposed use of narcotics before being elected and Mr. Obama's persistent smoking habit have both been the subject of media scrutiny. The days when an elected official could be an unrepentant philanderer and get away with it are over. Still, there are reasons to believe that these men may have what it takes to lead their parties to electoral victory.

First among them are the electrifying speeches each

man gave at their party's convention. At the 2005 Tory



The days when an elected official could be an unrepentant philanderer and get away with it are over

conference, Mr. Cameron delivered a speech entitled "Change to Win" that offered a radical repositioning of the traditional Conservative line that aimed to broaden the party's appeal. A year later, he is now the party's leader. Similarly, Mr. Obama secured his star status at the 2004 Democratic National Convention as the keynote speaker. His speech, "The Audacity of Hope," so

aroused the party faithful that he was soon being lauded as a 2008 presidential contender. It is worth noting that Mr. Obama was tapped for the keynote speech before he had even been elected to the Senate. The DNC was held in July 2004, four months before he would glide into office. These speeches displayed how deftly Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama can command the attention of their parties and the general electorate. In turn, this has allowed them to articulate a vision for bringing their parties back into the mainstream and back into power.

The solution to these chronic problems, according to Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama, is to inject party rhetoric with some of the more resonant parts from the opposite side of the ideological spectrum in an effort to bring the party back into the election-winning centre. For Mr. Cameron, this has meant embracing environmentalism (quite literally with the huskies), taking a softer line on crime by advocating social responsibility and facing down the obsessive tax cutting wing of his party. The Tories under Mr. Cameron would be an inclu-

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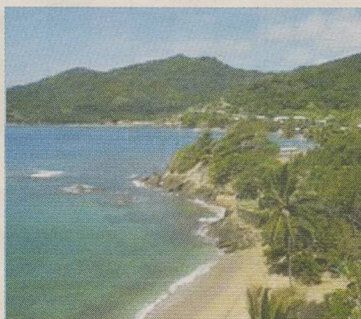


Music

Alternative Music Stuff.
Go and see some live beat combos, both here and elsewhere.

Travel

Island paradise lost and found in Trinidad & Tobago



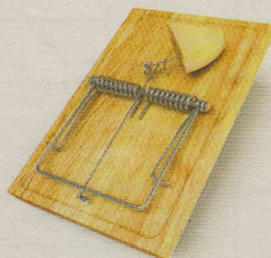
Film

Asphalt Jungle sees the world's most famous blonde back on the big screen



Literature

Atlas Shrugged leaves us non-plussed, but Toole gives us food for thought



Theatre

Contrasting sides of the West End: A long-running whodunnit and a brand new musical

The Early Years

Hot on the heels of their self-titled debut album, The Early Years play Brixton. Their expansive psychedelic sounds will surely fill, then burst this venue, undoing the good work started by support The Lea Shores and The Left Outsidies.

Where: The Windmill
Prices: £4
Date: October 13th

Rodin

300 of Auguste Rodin's greatest sculptures, including *The Kiss*, *The Gates of Hell* and *The Thinker*. The exhibition follows the journey that Rodin made, both in artistic terms and in geographical ones, as it explores his relationship with Britain.

Where: Royal Academy of Arts
Prices: £10
Date: Until January 1st

Doug Stanhope

American stand-up comedian who has worked with Sacred Cow, Bill Hicks' production company, and earned rave reviews at the Edinburgh Festival. Our Comedy Comptroller says: "Never seen the guy, but according to his Edinburgh Festival diary, he made some girl with a dead sister cry. Gotta be worth a look."

Where: Soho Theatre
Time: 9.30pm
Prices: Mon-Wed (In advance) £15/£12.50
Mon-Wed (On the door) £17.50/£15
Thurs-Sat (In advance) £17.50/£15
Thurs-Sat (On the door) £20/£17.50
Date: Until October 24th

The Knife

Message forum for knife enthusiasts to ask questions and discuss topics with peers. Includes archives of past discussions. Includes The Bernard Levine Knife Collecting and Identification Forum. "The Knife Expert"; author of Levine's Guide to Knives and their Values, Blade Magazine Correspondent (since 1974) and Knife World Editor (since 1978).

Where: The Forum
Prices: £15
Date: October 14th

opinion comptroller
joshheller

music comptroller
samashon

visual arts comptroller
daisymitchell-forster

food & drinking comptroller
alansplode

auntie's personal comptroller
ismatabidi

comptroller of the week



EDITORIAL

I know you're looking for someone, to tell you about LSE, someone to give you opinions, to report the facts objectively,
Someone never weak but always strong,
Someone to open each and every door,
But it ain't me babe.
No, no, no, It ain't me babe, It ain't me you're looking for, babe.
If you're looking for someone who's just been shortlisted for the Guardian Student Media awards, then it is us you're looking for. Babe.

chillin' like Bob Dylan

Daniel B Yates & Kevin Perry



BORED GAMERS

joshheller examines one alternative to the increasingly technological age in which we live, the humble board game...

Board games are considered to be a wholesome form of entertainment. They are sociable and so are thought to be somehow better for you than, for example, video games. Not that many people play board games in the Noughties, or if they do their activities have become less public. Advertising for board games is becoming somewhat sparse; no longer do we see the bizarre donkey from Buckaroo going mental in between episodes of Captain Planet. There is something about board games that suggests tired and old. Board games have tried to enter the realm of young and hip. Some include videos and electronic noise-making things, others have simply morphed into computer games. There is still the potential for board games to enter the public sphere. Board games can, from time to time, court controversy. From the probably racist Ghettopoly to the possibly brilliant War on Terror, board games still have the power to make Guardian and Mail readers alike foam at the mouth.

Is there validity to the suggestion that board games are a pleasant and wholesome form of entertainment? Bruised egos and injured hands may result from a lengthy game of Jenga, but that is the result of over zealous foot-stampers rather than the game itself. What is there to be said against Scrabble? It may well only be a way for siblings with large vocabulary's to lord it over their younger

cussion about the issue. The game is played, old stereotypes are trotted out to no one's amusement and then the game finishes. At no point is there an encouragement to examine the prejudices so many hold. It is true that the aspiration of a large number of extremely poor black American youths is to deal drugs to make money. The average black male has a 28.5% chance of going to jail. These are horrendous problems and there should be debate and discussion to solve them. Humour can and always will play a part but the idea of simply perpetuating the idea that black people are killers through the medium of a game that isn't funny is awful. It can be summed like so; dialogue about racism and things that are funny and good, whereas blatant racism is bad.

The other game that has caused a stir is the War on Terror board game. "Everyone starts with the best intentions. Then things start to get cramped. Then you notice your neighbour has more oil than you. Before long, war is waged, nukes are dropped, revolutions are fought and terrorists are doing your dirty work, before turning on you..."

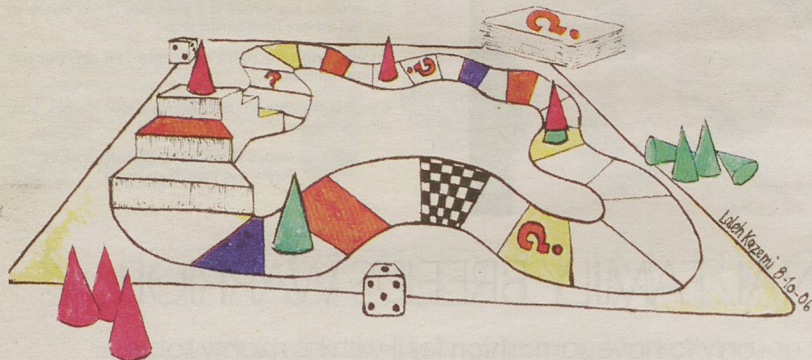
Coming from two Cambridge based entrepreneurs, this is a far better approach for satire, not least because it is heavily mocking both sides. Not in itself a cause for celebration but certainly a more palatable form of humour. The player can play as either the empire ridding

Ryan Giordano

Board Game Enthusiast



Ryan Giordano is from Chicago. PartB randomly approached him in The Quad and to our surprise and delight Ryan had some strong views on board games. Chess, Go and Settlers of Qutan are some of the many board games that Ryan plays. He thinks they're brilliant. He and his friends don't really have TVs so they have to find some way to waste time. Board games encourage far more social interaction than do passive activities like watching TV. In a cinema you're not allowed to talk and in a club you can barely hear yourself do so. Board games aren't necessarily going out of fashion; it depends on who you talk to. Settlers of Qutan is an example of a really interactive board game. It's played by four people and is a blend of mostly strategy and some luck. You have to build up resources, make roads and create settlements. It's a very social game, with a lot of player trading and usually an inevitability of backstabbing. People will get offended and angry so drinking is a good idea, Ryan's sister (name unknown) thinks drinking is critical to your enjoyment. It is very popular in America Ryan tells us. It seems he prefers the kind of games with a lot of thinking and strategy. Not a big fan of Snap then? Ryan hadn't heard of Snap! Responding to the visual shock of his interviewer at having to explain the principles and rules of Snap, Ryan said they called it a different name in Chicago. An odd claim indeed and it is met with much scepticism. There is a bright future for board games according to this young lad. A lot of interesting, thoughtful and exciting games are being made. Good strategic games that are (thank god) cutting down on the luck factor. Playing board games online will be a big part of the strategy. Chess partners can play all over the world together for example. As TV gets more disgusting and puerile, hopefully people will turn away from the box and onto the board.



brothers (bastards!) but at least it attempts to let people vent their frustration through spelling as opposed to pinning me down and making me hit my own face. Board games can provide a structure whereby naturally competitive (usually violent) tendencies can be healthily channelled into gaming superiority. Far better to have a friend ruthlessly outbid you for Mayfair than to have them outbid you for that rare vinyl you both found on ebay. If a mate thinks they've got one over on you at Ker-Plunk they may be less inclined to insult you behind your back, having already proved their superior status in games. There are a lot of games that are so bloody dull that they cause neither arguments nor fights. No individual has ever won a game of Downfall, because no two people have ever bothered to actually finish a game. The result of some games is neither pleasant nor wholesome but sometimes quite frightening. My grandma once got so excited and terrified playing Pass the Bomb she came close to coronary-arrest. The inevitability in Risk of one person being ganged up on has destroyed more friendships than casual sex has. Trivial Pursuit games among extended families often turn into something like Battle Royale. It's a fight to the intellectual death for the six cheeses.

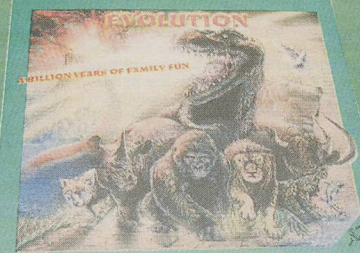
Board games can be nice and jolly. They are often not. They can set you on a path to hilarity or horror, but it usually depends on the people playing them.

Two recent board games have set the bar for potential controversy quite high. The first is Ghettopoly. It has liquor stores and XXX Peep-shows to buy as "properties", you can play as a cannabis leaf, crack or a machine gun. The company that produces it advertises the in game abilities of "pimpin' hoes and building crack houses." One particularly pleasant part of the game is the chance cards, "You got you whole neighbourhood addicted to crack. Collect \$50 from each playa." There is said to be a thin line between satire and offence. That may be true, but there is a bloody thick line between racism and things that are funny, this vile board game falls face down on the former. The idea that this game encourages people to examine stereotypical views is nonsense. There is no dis-

the world of terrorists (who hate freedom) or the terrorists ridding the world of the empire (presumably who love freedom). The spinner in the middle of the board is the Axis of Evil. There are cards the player receives that, among other things, can be used for suicide bombings. The Daily Mail had an article on the new game. That wonderful newspaper is always searching for new levels of objectivity in their coverage, so naturally they led with the comments of a totally neutral onlooker with no connection whatsoever to either the war on terror or suicide bombings; a survivor of the London bombings. Jacqui, from Huntingdon, Cambs, said: "It is so inappropriate at this time, it is sick, and I almost feel like saying it is dangerous - it is liable to encourage the wrong sort of approach to terrorism which is something we can't afford." I guess by "wrong approach" she thinks terrorists will be encouraged to think there are real cards that exist that are just as potent as actual suicide bombings, although why she thinks we couldn't afford them is beyond me. The War on Terror is quite an easy target for satire and much of the content in the game has been said and debated over before. It is the format the humour takes rather than the content which is original and rather funny. There are certainly valid arguments that this kind of humour will also perpetuate negative stereotypes, it is probably less likely though given the more rounded approach and the clear emphasis on humour. It's neither brilliant, genius, productive nor useful, but it's quite a clever way to amusingly criticise a lot of people.

So games have their place, they can be wholesome or evil and they can be fun or boring. Board games have probably existed since around 3500 BC, with Senet believed to be the oldest board game (oh Wikipedia, can't live without it, can't trust a word on it). They've been around for a while and have only really started to change in the past decade. Video-thingsy bits have been added or political spin adopted. There's a pretty good chance the world of board games is going to change even faster and in the coming decades. It's going to be a wacky roller-coaster of a ride, so get off the platform and get on board.

COMPETITION



We have JUST ONE copy of Evolution, the board game, to give away.

Arguably the most entertaining board game of our generation, you start life from your own sector on a primitive volcanic world. By choosing your evolutionary path carefully to avoid natural calamities, you must beat off challenges from other species as you progress to become the dominant species.

To win this fabulous prize, simply suggest the evolutionary enhancement for human beings that would make us even more adept at being the most dominant species on the planet.

Please send emails to thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk with subject line DO THE EVOLUTION.

OPINION

SIR RICHARD BISHOP

Live Preview
Sir Richard Bishop
 @ Shaw Library
 Friday 6th, 1pm

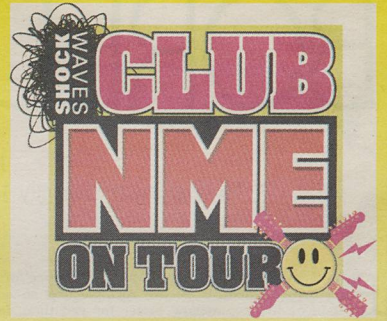
What do the Velvet Underground, Devendra Banhart and epic doom-merchants Sunn O))) have in common? All have loose ties to Sir Richard Bishop, the Seattle-based experimental musician who visits the LSE's own den of forty-winks the Shaw Library this Friday at 1pm. Bishop is a dazzling unaccompanied guitarist, admired by old masters (the deceased John Fahey) and contemporary leaders (Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore) alike. SRB's day-to-day income comes from dealing in rare occult books, the themes of which dominate his psychedelic steel-string stomps.

At a previous London show, Sir Richard opened his set with a half-hour Indian raga piece which departed from the Middle-Eastern classical form into a flurry of disarming rhythms which would sound as homely on a punk 45 as on the high-brow labels that generally house his recordings. SRB's playing is exhaustive in its influences, pioneering in its delivery, exhilarating in its execution. The sound of six strings pulling in a thousand directions at once whilst his hand glides over the fretboard with alarming speed makes for essential, entrancing listening.

Also a member of the influential, yet stubbornly obscure, ethno-improv group Sun City Girls, Sir Richard has been playing since the late 70s and has at various points proved himself a true hero to the solo-acoustic form. His virtuosity does not prevent his live performances from being wildly enjoyable. There is a good chance Sir Richard will drop in a couple of Django Reinhardt-esque gypsy swing pieces; brief sprints into the sorts of upbeat nimble stylings that Woody Allen always chooses to wash over his slapstick scenes. Even the stern faces of the former-directors who watch over the Shaw Library are sure to seem livelier as the stinging energy of

jamiestevens looks forward to the lse leg of his uk tour...

Bishop's own imprint of psych-folk swell and resonate throughout the top floor of the Old Building. Don't miss out.



Get your glowsticks and smiley-face badges at the ready - ShockWaves Club NME on Tour is coming to London on the 13th October.

The self-styled kings of new rave Klaxons headline the 16-date tour that promises to be a non-stop indie dance party, Shitdisco and Data Rock make-up the explosive line-up that will transport new music fans into a whole new dimension!

Jamie Reynolds, front man, Klaxons predicts that ShockWaves Club NME On Tour is 'going to be mayhem with an absolute bonkers line-up of idiots!' We presume he includes himself in that. Meanwhile Shitdisco front man Jamie Reeves thrillingly expounds: 'I can't wait! We've played with Klaxons a bunch of times and I really like Datarock, so it should be really good!'

Tickets have completely sold out but you can still be there thanks to purveyors of tweaked hairness, ShockWaves. PartB has teamed with ShockWaves to offer you and a mate the chance to be part of this new rave revolution! Plus, ShockWaves has thrown in a shed load of hair stylers so you can achieve head-turning looks.

To win one of 2 pairs of tickets just answer the below question:

Complete the William Burroughs-referencing Klaxons song title, 'Atlantis to...?'

answers mailed to thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk
 Terms and conditions apply

MUSIC

DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY BREEDS WARRIOR

only to have samash-ton fell it with his mighty sabre...

LP
Akron/Family
Meek Warrior

Oh dear. It's that time again. Time for one of my favourite bands to release a second album. As a quivering nerd of a music fan there are very few things I do with more trepidation than sliding that shiny metallic disc of possible wonder, but equally possible coruscating disappointment, into the plastic tray of delight, or perhaps despair. You see second albums are tricky beasts, especially if you've got a well worn and much loved debut behind you. Do you play it safe and release the same album again (See *The Strokes*) only to be written off as extremely bland one trick ponies or do you let the experimentation run riot and release a totally different album (See *Liars*) and risk alienating your entire fan base? It's obviously a tricky question, and one that most bands unfortunately get wrong. I mean does can anyone even name a song off the second Yeah Yeah Yeahs album?

I thought I knew which way *Akron/Family* would go, last years split EP with *Angels of Light* suggested the band were not ones to stand still, containing, as it did, three songs that hinted at a boundless creativity and complete disregard for genre boundaries that one would be hard pushed to find on their debut album. I mean any band that follows the gorgeously melodic folk ditty 'Awake' with the explosion of screeching feedback, bent notes and wild percussion that is 'Moment' is not one I expect to release boring retreats of former glories. And then there were their wildly cathartic live shows where

the bands songs used as launching pads for excruciatingly loud noise explorations, tribal drumming, electronic manipulation and a-cappella sing-a-longs.

So it is with some surprise and a considerable amount of annoyance that I find myself curiously unmoved by *Meek Warrior*. It starts off with the nine minute monstrosity 'Blessing Force' which contains elements of all their previous songs haphazardly chopped up and thrown into a pot of bizarrely unsticky glue and called a song. What should be *Akron/Family*'s tour de force comes across as a jarring greatest hits medley played by a somewhat soulless collection of session musicians. The songs only saving grace is two minutes of deliciously skronky free Jazz sax that comes in towards the end.

After 'Blessing Force' much of the rest of the album retreats back down the well worn path of pleasant folk songs. 'Gone Beyond' is much like earlier song 'Afford' in it's earthy simplistic structure, consisting, as it does, of little more than a pleasantly picked guitar, gentle percussion, and a single lyric 'But where 'Affords' lyric 'The power I afford you, is the one I wish, I had over you' lent the song poignancy through it's repetition, the sheer banality of "Gone gone gone beyond, gone completely beyond," throughout it's entire length, causes the song to come across as little more than folk-themed wall paper.

Fortunately the album contains two songs that lift themselves clear above the overwhelmingly mundane masses. The first is the title track which starts with twinkling chimes, bells and prayer bowls, evolves into swiftly strummed guitar, sing-



a-long vocals, hand claps, and some fuzzy bass riffing. That all this occurs over its exceedingly short 1:50 run time is testament to the bands dense song writing, yet such excellence only serves to rub salt into the wounds of sheer boredom inflicted by the other songs. The second is 'The Rider (Dolphin Song)' which manages to be the only song to come close to capturing the sheer power of the bands live shows. Far more cohesive than 'Blessing Force', containing as it does a central theme, the song nonetheless departs on several short noise

explorations alongside some gloriously repetitive riffing. These two songs confirm that *Akron/Family* still have the capacity to become the great band that has been hinted at previously, yet to do so the band must continue to move forward and explore new territory, and much of this album is rooted firmly to the floor.

RECLAIM, REVIVE, RECYCLE

abaosunsade rummages through society's refuse and comes up smelling of roses...

Remember the days when only punk rockers and emos wore drainpipe jeans? When only girls below the age of eight could get away with having an aliceband in their hair? When only men who wore hearing aids and bifocals could rock a cardigan? Well, the times they are a-changin' as high street shops have recently taken it upon themselves to break down style barriers and universalize signature clothing items into trendy pieces for all to enjoy.

Skulls and crossbones have been reclaimed from the masts of pirate ships and now adorn everything from t-shirts, to belts, to scarves. Cardigans have been rescued from the 'I've got more hair in my nose than on my head' age group and will be an essential for every male, old or young, this winter. Try Burton and H&M for ones with stripy patterns that leave you looking more David Beckham than David Attenborough.

Another successful reclamation is evident in the explosion of tartan gracing most womenswear collections. You don't have to be ginger and live off shortbread biscuits to pull off traditional Scottish prints this winter. For those of you not keen on being a walking ode to the land of Loch Ness I recommend tartan accessories, such as Miss Selfridges' clutch bag. To add a bit of nature to our concrete jungle, womenswear collections are still abundant with leopard prints, which look best when worn minimally i.e. in the form of scarves or ballet flats. Which brings me to the greatest reclamation of all. Remember when the only girls who wore flat shoes in formal situations were the ones who couldn't walk in heels? No longer, my friends! From boots to pumps, the flat



heel is still 'in' for every sensible female - not simply those well into their golden years suffering from constantly swollen ankles. Enjoy it while it lasts, a platform-heel revival is on the horizon!

Speaking of revivals, the fashion world has been dipping into the crayola box to find long neglected colours in desperate need of attention. Sigh. You'd think by now manufacturers would have realised that NO ONE suits that 'mustard' shade of yellow that only exists in nature when a curry doesn't go down very well. Similarly, purple is another trend you should try to avoid. Unless you're a plum or a grape. And forget what you heard on the streets - black is not back. The key theme this autumn/winter will be juxtaposing dreary grey days with blinding bolts of colour. If you're pale skinned, fret not. You won't need a fake tan to pull off these Stabilo inspired shades if you layer them with calmer tones.

For all you lovely beatniks, hippies and/or cash-strapped people still riding the vintage bandwagon, you'll be happy to hear that it is very la mode to borrow trends from past decades e.g. leggings from the 80's and shift dresses from the 60's. And who said recycling wasn't fun? Be sure to purchase such second-hand steals from charity shops such as Traid and Oxfam where items are reasonably priced with proceeds going towards a good cause, as opposed to high street retailers such as Topshop, who shamelessly overprice items (most likely) nicked from dead peoples' closets.



Finally, a politician takes some interest in fashion. Not David Cameron's Converse trainees, ('fiercely fashionable' The Telegraph), but former Home Secretary Jack Straw. He's asking women to uncover their faces, nix the niqab, and get yer faces out for the lads. You know he's in touch with the mood of the nation - 'Quite a lot of people are angry about Iraq,' admits Straw.

Style Rule One - don't take style advice from this dildo.

So, let's take a look at the face-coverings from around the world that will be sweeping the fashion world this season.

Revenge is Best Served Stripy



Having a bad face day? Why not cheer up your office-mates with this fucking terrifying stripy-horse-face mask.

The nostrils are a bit lopsided, which means you can tuck a fag into one for a lazy smoke.

Dad's Stylish Army

It's not often retro is also practical. But you're in London now, and this could be the answer to those bad smog/anthrax-raining-from-the-skies days. Plus, you can fart in the tube and sniff away to your heart's content, with no-one any the wiser.



Give yourself a hug, a Face Hug!

This one will implant a foetus in your chest which will later burst out, and kill you dead. But, Coleen Rooney swears by them for a hungover Sunday morning brunch.

Often compared to cunninglugs.



christinewhyte

STYLE

SUPER-SIZED FUN-BAGS

rebeccafok brings new meaning to the term bag lady...

In last week's issue of the Beaver, Part B was recruiting for many positions, including a 'Style Comptroller', whose perks include 'ability to determine fashion, being fabulous'.

First of all, let me inform those of you who haven't picked up a style magazine since Tom Ford left Gucci, or those of you who simply don't read fashion articles online and offline obsessively, that the Word-approved version of 'fabulous', fabulous, has been so over-exposed in the past years that fashion journalists these days try to use it minimally. 'Fabulous' is often used only when one cannot think of a suitable impressive-sounding adjective. It's sort of like when you thought something your friend recommended enthusiastically was only so-so and you don't want to offend her, so you say convincingly, 'it was... interesting.'

Anyways, enough of my very interesting rambling. How was everyone's first week of school? Before your reading, class work and various applications start to pile up, I hope everyone took the time to enjoy one of the few silver linings of starting school - that's back-to-school shopping of course! Hardworking students that we are, back-to-school shopping does not only have to mean buying your required textbooks from Waterstones. It can hopefully mean buying something fun, like a school-bag or a coat, just to give your new school year a cheerful start.

If you're a Fresher, you may have noticed that most university students, especially the females, have abandoned the ever-trusty backpacks because backpacks are like, so secondary school. Instead, we now like to think ourselves as



grownup and stylish individuals and shop around other options.

From my observations, big, neutral-coloured (-white, sand, brown and black) leather bags from the High Street are common within the female bag-carrying population at LSE. For the designer brand-lovers, Longchamp totes are extremely popular with the girls, as are monogrammed totes by Gucci and Vuitton. On the other hand, most of the guys carry black messenger bags, backpacks and duff

bag (on Wednesdays) Interestingly, the most recognisable and common brand of male-carried bags is the LSE! These bags I just mentioned look smart and are perfectly practical. And then there are those of us who value beauty over practicality: I noticed a few girls around campus toting cute Dior handbags on one shoulder and carrying their books and lecture notes in the other hand.

The good news is, finding the perfect school bag this year should be much easier than the past few years because big bags are 'in' this season so there'll be many styles in shops. Just look around you - from the new bag collections at Top Shop and Zara to the latest Chanel print ad featuring a huge black vinyl bag - big bags are simply THE thing to have this season.

With so many big bags in the market, you really should know what your dream bag is like before actually shopping for it because afterwards, you can just shop at specific stores and save a lot of time. Consider these while choosing a book bag: It is so important that the bag is light-weight -your books and notes are heavy enough as it is. What fabric do you like? With the unpredictable drizzles, you might want your bag to be water-resistant, in which case you should look for nylon bags. Suede leather becomes dirty very quickly so you should avoid it. Also, dark neutral colours are recommended because after all, you wouldn't want to get sick of your bag too soon. Also, what kind of bag do you want? If you can't figure out whether you want a tote or a messenger bag, totes with long straps, i.e. a tote and messenger bag all-in-one, is all the rage this season so you won't even have to choose!

Alan Bennett: The History Boy

alan bennett is arguably britain's greatest living playwright. his latest play *the history boys* has just been made into a feature film. partb's editor daniel yates asks him about university, swearing and the joys of lifelong education...

Under the hail of chewed-up paper and tampons the swot bears ritual humiliation. Under the barrage of insults and laughter the swot ploughs their lonely furrow. Having accepted, as a mode of scholastic existence, the very thing that fuels the counter-cultural identity of their peers, they are doomed to dangle on an unsupported limb, cutting lonely caricatured figures on the peripheries, entombed in afterschool loneliness with the only the faint consolation of institutional and parental praise to validate their chosen path. This is the swot's lot. But could this begin to change? Say perhaps a really cool film comes out that turns academic endeavour into something akin to a wheeling Reservoir Dogs style portrait of coolness. Something with fast-cut scenes of hard academic graft, young men with filmstar good looks hitting the books, in slick tableaux endowed with celluloid cool.

The History Boys began life in 2004 at the National Theatre and, after selling out like crack-infused hot cakes, stormed Broadway in the April of 2005. During that time the play accrued nearly all the prestigious theatrical awards in existence. Two Olivier awards, both the Evening Standard and the Critic's Circle awards for Best Play, and across the pond a mammoth haul of six Tonys. Following this success the play was adapted by its writer Alan Bennett into a film. It follows the stories of eight bright, funny history students in the north of England around about the mid 1980s, who are pursuing places at Oxbridge. Their ambitious little headmaster, in a quest for associated glory, enlists the services of Irwin, a savvy operator fresh from Oxford, to coach the boys into intellectual shape. Seduced though they are by the new teacher's inventive, dynamic and ultimately pragmatic approach to their education, the boys are torn by their affection for the eccentric poetry-spouting master Hector, played by Richard Griffiths, and the steady diet of nourishing facts and figures provided by Miss Lintott, their history teacher played by Frances De La Tour. It is through these figures that Bennett plays out a great clash of pedagogical ideologies. In Hector and Lintott is embodied a liberal enlightenment education, with knowledge as a furthering and elevating of humankind. Against this is pitched the journalistic approach of Irwin, a pragmatic response to the demands of the examination system, with tricks and inventiveness, post-modernist irony, verve and flippancy.

We are at the Dorchester, the rococo bastion of surplus value, where Blair tells lies to court his rich sponsors and world business leaders lie on silk sheets and dream of getting richer. Even James Corden, British television staple in his roles in *Hollyoaks* and *Fat Friends*, can't quite believe the opulence. "We've just had 4 ice creams. That came to 46 quid. True story!" He exclaims in his hilarious shriek of a voice. The rest of the boys are here, smiling and laughing with Bennett whose face is reddened in one continuous blush with the sheer joy of being around

such exuberant youth. His head is constantly pitching left and right in slightly bewildered backseat rapture, following the crossfire of the boys' rapid banter. Whilst he can never quite track it all he is bearing a smile that can hardly contain his beatific joy at being with them. It seems fair to say that like many of his characters, Bennett likes the company of young men. In the play there is something that will be undoubtedly construed by right wing critics as an apology for paedophilia. The older characters' normal and obvious sexual attraction to youth and vigour is played out under the sexually barren and oppressive eye of the school institution. Bennett doesn't so much humanise paedophilia as simply assume its place in our sexualities. Our inexorable libidinous pull towards the altar of Hebe is ingrained in our sexualities. We are placed consistently in positions where the draw of nubile young flesh is to be resisted, where our sexualities must never be indulged. Should we cave in to our desire, as Hector does in the film, then we are not just censored but punished.

After a short while we are ushered through into a cream paneled room and told we have "about 10 minutes" with which to plumb the interiority of a playwright whose work, of such extraordinary depth and density, will demand further decades of studying by the foremost academic institutions of the English language to be enriched to its fullest meaning. The pale and dandyish figure of the man, still boyish under the craquelure of advancing years, sits carefully and composes himself circumspectly as if he were making of himself a simple and gentle origami. We start by asking him about something close to our journalistic hearts, swearing. "Filth is extremely important, it cleanses nonsense" says Bennett in his prim Yorkshire tenor. Is there ever sufficient reason to tone it down? "Well, in this film actually. Dakin [one of the boys], when it's said to him, 'I didn't think you were that way inclined' [after the character makes advances on Irwin the dynamic young teacher] he replied, 'oh, it's the end of term, I got into Oxford, I thought I might push the boat out.' And the Americans were supposed not to understand that phrase, so in the beginning it was altered to 'oh it's the end of term, I just got into Oxford, I thought I might roll out the red carpet.' But under the circumstances that somehow seemed far too obscene, so we changed it back to the original." And Bennett directs a chuckle somewhere into the corner of himself.

So what's Bennett's take on the LSE? "Isn't that a bank?" he questions with a sardonic smile.

Bennett himself was an Oxford undergraduate. In his foreword to the published play, the author describes how he "cheated" to get a scholarship at the university: "I reduced everything I knew to a set of notes with answers to possible questions and odd, eye-catching quotations all written out on a series of forty or fifty correspondence cards, a handful of which I carried in my pocket everywhere



HOW DID I
GET INTO
OXFORD? I
CHEATED.

FILTH IS
IMPORTANT,
IT CLEANSSES
NONSENSE.

I went." These 'minced morsels' were duly regurgitated and Bennett won his scholarship. Preparing for his final exams in history at Oxford, Bennett discovered another technique, that of taking an idea and turning it on its head in order to grab attention. Again his methods paid off. "In a sense," he says, "I am Irwin".

But, as the play would suggest, there is more to Bennett's learning than native academic cunning. "I felt my education only began after I'd left university. I mean even in an absolutely practical way. I don't for instance, remember reading a book through from start to finish until a fair time after I'd left university, when we went to New York with beyond the fringe which was in 1962. Coming back on the boat I read *Bleak House* and *Great Expectations*. That was the first time I'd read a book from start to finish and kept thinking as I was reading, 'Oh, I'm enjoying this, and yet it's a classic'. I'd somehow thought of the classics of literature as something apart from me, something to do with academic life and not something you enjoyed. It took me a long, long time to learn something you really ought to learn at school but not many people do".

After our time with Bennett is up, we get to fuck around with the boys. In a certain sense. James Corden is shrieking and telling everyone how famous he is in highly ironic terms. Richard Griffiths is telling them that they don't know the meaning of the word respect; the boys protest, but he continues. "There has been no visible demonstration of your understanding of the word". He turns to the assembled clutch of press. "If you're not overly fond of the scatological or have any sense of propriety when it comes to sexual mores, don't talk to these boys".

I get talking to Sam Barnett (who plays Posner in the film), about education and the Irwin character. "The sad thing about Irwin, and the thing he never quite gets to realize, is that whilst he's very intellectually tricky he lacks what might be called a spiritual side. When Dakin confronts him, saying, 'yes, you're very good at this game, but about your life, what about your personal life? You're brave with these decisions you make, why aren't you as brave in your life as you are in your teaching?' You can't ever sacrifice your life for getting university and getting grades. You can put all that work in but at the end of the day if you haven't grown as a person, what is the point?" And from the quivering lips of this sensitive boy, who incidentally does a great impression of Celia Johnson in *Brief Encounter*, comes sage advice for many LSE students.



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

louannsugden unmasks two small islands with big personalities...

TRAVEL

Trinidad and Tobago lies at the southern end of the Caribbean. It is a land that defies all preconceived notions of island living. The twin island republic boasts very different personalities though. Trinidad is the vibrant, vivacious sister who is always on the run and looking for fun. Whereas, Tobago is the quiet, more easy going sister.

Trinidad is the 'party capital of the Caribbean'. In Trinidad there is even a name for hanging out; 'limin'. 'Trinis' love to 'lime' and there's a lot of opportunity for this, from the various local nightclubs, to the myriad of outdoor 'fetes' organized throughout the year. 'Soca', is the music of choice and the 'whine' is the preferred dance.

This 'party-loving' attitude expresses itself each year in the biggest street parade - The Carnival. Two days before Ash Wednesday, the streets of the capital Port of Spain is transformed into a paradise of colour, sweet sounds of steel pan and 'Soca' waft through the air and there is an energy and vibrancy that can only be described as ecstatic. For two days all citizens and foreigners alike unite for one common purpose - to abandon everyday worries.

A walk through the streets of Port of Spain reveals a new discovery at every turn. From the old British colonial buildings, to the 'ginger bread' houses of the past, to the massive skyscrapers that now dot the skyline. It is also a good way to meet many locals and observe their daily lives. Around the 'Savannah' (a great park in the middle of the city) you can get a fresh coconut full of water. You can drink as you stroll around taking in the 'Magnificent Seven' - seven of the most grand and architecturally appeal-



ing houses from the colonial past. This transports you to a time and place which can only lead to reflection. Nearby there is also the Museum, The Botanical Gardens and many other historical buildings and places of interest.

If one starts to long for the typical Caribbean experience, Tobago is only a 20 - 30 minute plane ride or 3 hours boat ride

away. The air fare from Trinidad is approximately £30 and by boat £10. In Tobago, the laid back attitude is almost immediately noticeable after stepping of the plane or boat. It is small and idyllic, with many great beaches throughout the island. It is one of the least commercial of all tourist destinations of the Caribbean and still has a genuine charm.

Popular beaches such as Pigeon Point, Store bay and Mt. Irvine boast the best facilities, but if one wants to go to a more private beach there are many to choose from. Tobago is home to the oldest protected rainforest in the Western Hemisphere and boasts a huge eco-tourism industry aimed at creating jobs through conservation of the environment.

You can also take a glass bottom boat ride to the Bucco Reef where all varieties of fish can be found and to the 'Nylon Pool' where it is rumoured if you swim there you will feel 10 years younger. For those more adventurous you can go scuba diving and snorkeling.

For those who go on holiday for the food, will find Trinidad and Tobago to be a culinary paradise. Thanks to its multicultural society there are many different types of traditional food up for sale. 'Creole' food brought by the Africans consists of rich stews, salted fish, rice dishes such as 'pelau' and 'hard food' like provisions. Whereas, the East Indians have brought the curry (NB, -very different from traditional Indian curry) and the ever popular 'roti', 'parata' and 'dhalpouri' and a myriad of Indian sweets and treats. For those into fine dining there is a booming market in gourmet restaurants serving up food from all over the world or creating eclectic food fusions-mixing local ingredients with international techniques and dishes.

Nota Bene; getting there from Europe is expensive, ranging from 400 - 800 pounds, but once you land - given the exchange rate, the 'pound' and 'dollar' are king.

LSE students will be treated like royals...

Sarastro

the show after the show

Located in the heart of Theatreland, only 5 minutes walk from the LSE, Sarastro is the most exciting and extravagant restaurant in the West End and a perfect place to spend time in before and after your show.

The restaurant is flamboyantly yet unpretentiously designed as a theatre with ten 'opera boxes' based on different artistic traditions.

The menu offers a fantastic choice of delicious Mediterranean and Turkish food, fresh seafood, exquisite wines and spirits.

Set menus start at £15

Massive discounts for LSE students only!

126 Drury Lane, TheatreLand, London, WC2B 5QG. Reservations: 02078360101

Papageno

the show never ends

A beautifully designed restaurant, only 7 minutes walk from the LSE, is named after the character in Mozart's 'Magic Flute'.

Papageno's design reminds you of Alladin's cave and an old opera set, where artistic exuberance complements wonderful cuisine.

The chef boasts a variety of Mediterranean food, exceptional fish, and tempting starters, such as the cheese Borek.

Spacious 700 seat Papageno welcomes student birthday parties, graduation celebrations and evening get-togethers.

Massive discounts for LSE students, every day and night!

29-31 Wellington St., Covent Garden, WC2E 7DB. Reservations: 02078364444

Luxurious culinary pampering for all LSE students...

ASPHALT JUNGLE

joeymellows sees the bfi re-release a classic

Film Noir

Directed by: John Huston
Starring: Sterling Hayden

The menacing musical score of Miklos Rozsa sets the scene for this superb, glacial thriller, which, despite being deliberately slow in the first hour, has not lost its ability to excite and captivate audiences in the modern day. Nominated for 4 Oscars and viewed as 'The Godfather of all heist movies', *The Asphalt Jungle* is a powerful 'tour de force', which creates an uncomfortable, moody atmosphere due to its crackling, raw dialogue and pervasive depiction of loneliness. Viewed as both controversial and ground-breaking when originally released, it risked being severely edited by provoking the stringently, strict Production Code of the time with its graphic depiction of a heist in authentic-looking detail and has inspired countless imitations including *Ocean's 11* (1960) and *The Usual Suspects* (1995).

The Asphalt Jungle (based on a W.R. Burnett novel) is essentially the story of a crime which fails. Despite only having just been released from a seven-year jail term, an eminent thief known as 'The Doc' wants to pull off one last job at an upmarket jewellery store before retiring to the girls and pure air of Mexico. He immediately heads off to see Cabby, an illegal bookie who sets about recruiting a gang to perform the heist: Dix (Hayden), the big Irish-American 'hooligan' with an obsession for horses and gambling; Gus, the hunchback restaurant operator with a heart of gold; Louis, the Italian-American, who can "crack any safe in



The ASPHALT JUNGLE

under four minutes"; and Emmerich (Calhern), the crooked lawyer with an anxiety-invalid for a wife and a "niece" for a mistress (the stunning Marilyn Monroe). At first the plan goes like clockwork, but as a number of little accidents accumulate, each partner proves to have his own fatal weakness - none more so than the scheming Emmerich who, in planning to double-cross his asso-

ciates, causes the meticulously orchestrated plan to fall apart and seals the fates of the six men.

So far, the plot outline sounds conventional enough with regard to earlier gangster movies from the tradition of American naturalism such as Mervyn LeRoy's *Little Caesar* (1931), or Howard Hawks' *Scarface* (1932). Where Huston's film excels, however, is in its lin-

ear and fluent narrative coupled with the sharpness of its character observation, which demonstrates that while each man has a weakness, none have a pathology. Huston's film can therefore be viewed as the exploration of whether inherent human weakness is determined by the environment as the ultimate architect of fate or by the individual themselves. It is the exploration of this previously untouched theme that marks *The Asphalt Jungle* as quite different from other gangster films, as Huston presents his characters as driven by the human need for freedom, rather than in earlier films where the gangster's characterisations are driven by their psychopathic need to kill due to their greed and nihilistic tendencies.

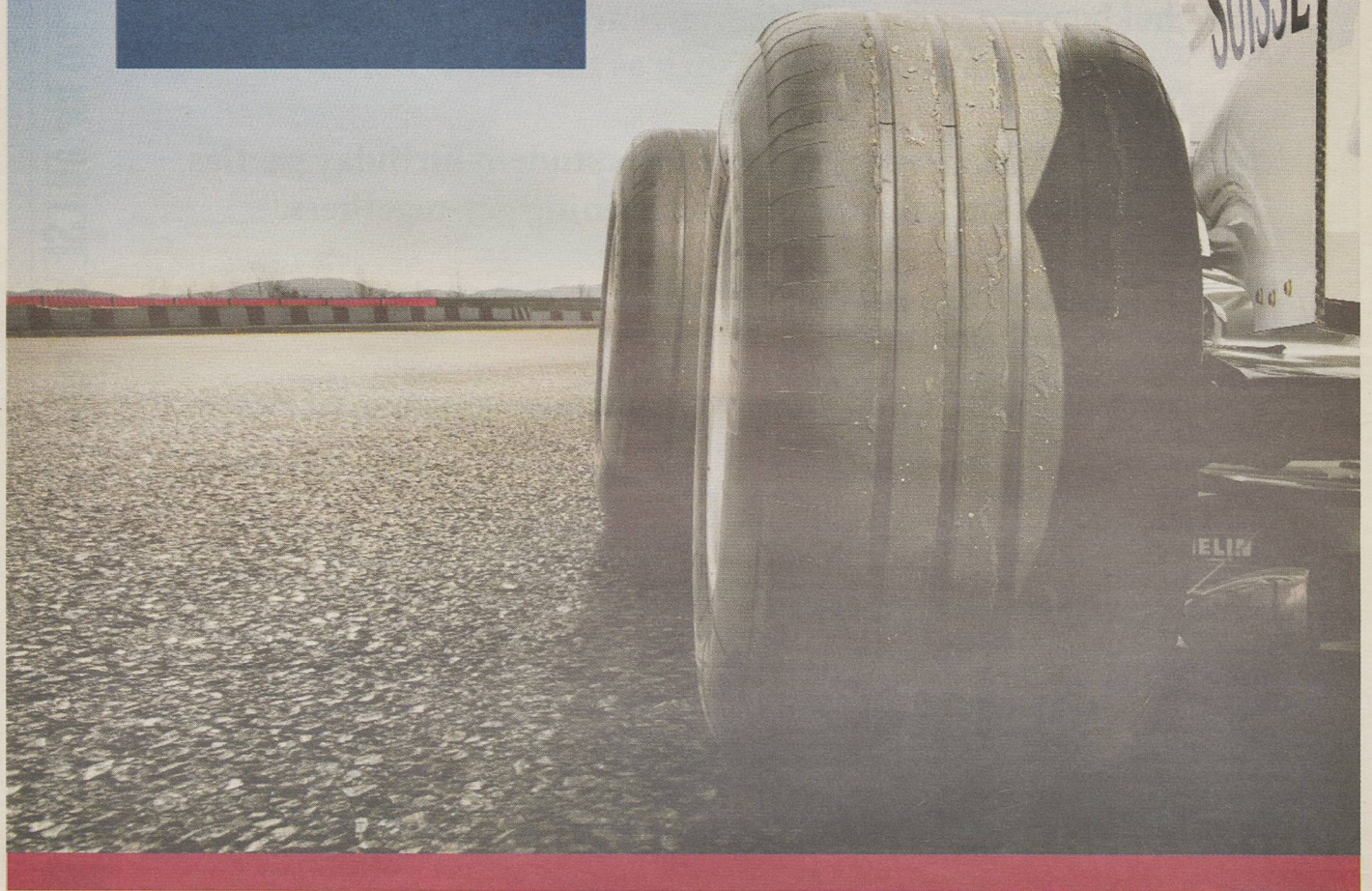
While portraying freedom rather than greed as the motive behind the characters' participation in the heist, Huston surprisingly chooses not to sentimentalise any of the group members. The motives of the harassed lawyer, intellectual doctor and hooligan who dreams of returning to his childhood farm are explained but, most notably, their actions are not excused. It was this original theme that led to Dilys Powell, a film reviewer of the time, to comment that *The Asphalt Jungle* came as "a relief after a series of films in which the community was made responsible for the disgraces of the individual, to come on this objective analysis of human weakness".

Despite Huston losing out to All About Eve's Joseph L. Mankiewicz for the Best Director Oscar, *The Asphalt Jungle* still stands up 56 years later as a superb foot-to-the-pedal cinematic caper and as a pre-eminent example of tough-guy cinema.

FILM

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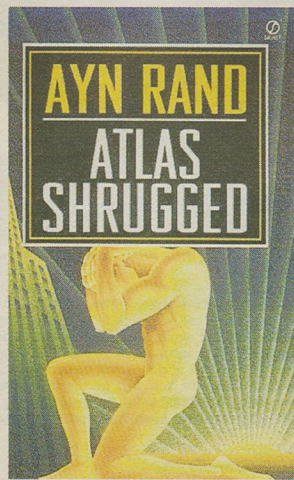
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ATLAS SHRUGGED

erinorozco shrugs off ayn rand's heavyweight



Atlas Shrugged
Ayn Rand

dry writing style and a predictable plot. Reaching the end is immensely satisfying, if only because it is finally over.

Atlas revolves around a cold war of sorts between industrialists and the 'looters' who leech off them. This conflict is portrayed as one that has been present throughout history, yet only becomes pronounced in the modern world when one John Galt decides to put an end to it, or as Rand phrases it to "stop the engine of the world". He does this by convincing the industrialists to go on strike, leaving the 'looters' to destroy the socialist societies they have created so that the industrialists can later rebuild the world on the principle of free commerce.

Rand's life is essential to an understanding of the book. A Soviet immigrant, she arrived in New York in 1926, having lied to Soviet officials to obtain a visa. She never returned to Russia, holding the US as the ideal of what free people could achieve. This admiration, particularly for New York, is a constant thread in Atlas. While taking odd jobs in Hollywood studios throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, she began writing screenplays. This segued into novel writing. Atlas was published in 1957, though Rand began writing it in 1946. The historical timing was perfect for this Soviet refugee as the Cold War was taking shape and, in her mind, illustrated the superior moral and philosophical grounds of a capitalist society as well as the dangers it faced from within and without. For this reason, Atlas is considered the most involved and explicit illustration of her personal philosophy and view on life.

It's no wonder then that this work of fiction reads more like an apocalyptic warning from a conservative think-tank. To say that this novel simply asserts Rand's unique philosophy is an understatement. Much of the dialogue between the industrialists and the 'looters' is less than subtle and certain to raise many a reader's indignation. In fact, the conflict is put forward so obviously at times that the reader starts to wonder if the simplifications are indeed an insult to one's intellect. Nonetheless, Atlas' saving grace is the character development of those caught in the middle of these opposing factions. These sub-plots include a woman rail executive who struggles with her preconceptions of greatness; a man who is resigned to the reality of the world around him, but cannot give up the railroad that represents the potential of those who have abandoned him; an inventor who is capable of greatness in the workplace, yet accepts humiliation and shame in his personal life; and a naive young woman who values her independence but is misled by those around her. These characters keep the reader intrigued despite forty-page monologues, boring descriptions of industrial landscapes, and an overall plot that is better suited to a political essay.

Overall this is not a book to be taken lightly. For those of us attempting to escape the grim world of politics and economics, it is certainly not a welcome retreat. Yet for those who are seeking an intellectual pursuit, and an understanding of the philosophy that gained Rand fame, this is a suitable, albeit long-winded, guide. In the end, the reader will be left

Ayn Rand's Atlas Shrugged is a mammoth of a book, lasting well over one thousand pages, but carrying it around earns you instant respect. It is this strange combination which makes Rand's novel a modern classic despite the

WICKED

I'll be honest - I was excited when I found out I was going to Wicked. Don't judge me yet: I'm culturally snobbish just like the next person, and musicals usually come in pretty darn low in my esteem. All that singing, dancing, and glitter: I can never tell if I'm jealous of the performers or irritated by them... Nevertheless, I was excited about Wicked. Maybe it had something to do with the fact that it stars Adam Garcia, better known to the female population as 'the fit one' from Coyote Ugly. Or maybe it was the plot that sounded intriguingly bizarre and just plain silly, even by musical theatre standards...

The musical is based on the premise that the Wicked Witch of the West from the Wizard of Oz is actually not wicked but in fact Elphaba, a misunderstood social outcast reviled as a school girl for her green skin, but later a passionate animal rights activist whose reputation is spun out of control by the press secretary of the corrupt government of Oz. I'm not denying it, it's lame, as is the cringe worthy and blatantly unlikely bit where Galinda, (the 'popular' girl who will later become Glinda the Good Witch) and Elphaba make friends against all the odds and despite significant loathing on both sides. Followed by a makeover. Ugh. One mustn't forget the painful scene where Fiyero (Garcia), the love interest, sings an almost entirely pointless and

loathsome song about 'Dancing Through Life' and how it's better than, like, caring about important stuff, and how, like, being shallow kicks ass. It also serves to prove finally once and for all that every man in musical theatre including, alas, Adam Garcia, must be gay in some place inside himself.

Despite all this, I really enjoyed it. I cared about the characters and what happened to them. I was humming along to the melodies and it may have been two wasted hours of my life, but I somehow didn't mind. Wicked might be flawed, but it does its job well, better than most musicals I've seen recently. Wicked, for all its silly plot and cheesy lines, is a fresh and unusual story, which suits the inherently frivolous nature of musical theatre. Musicals are about emotions. Over the top, set to music, dressed in sequins, but emotions nonetheless, and Wicked manages to touch and to charm without making you feel (too) stupid for caring. This is in no small part due to the charisma of the stars, especially Idina Menzel, who plays Elphaba superbly, and manages to skim lightly over her cheesier lines and numbers, while lighting up the stage with her big pieces like a true Broadway star.

In short, Wicked may not be art, it may not even be good, but if it's a West End musical you want, you could do a lot worse than this.

mollytucker



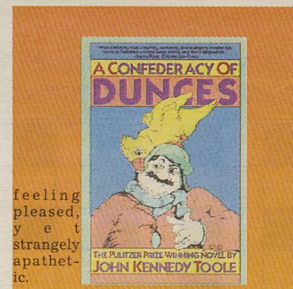
THE MOUSETRAP

After a solid 54 years at the West End and a jaw-dropping 20,000 performances, what makes The Mousetrap the world's longest running stage production? Like scurrying mice, why are we still drawn to the cheese at the centre of this Agatha Christie whodunit? Perhaps, I would suggest, the crowds continue to flock to St Martin's Theatre to celebrate the idea of the play rather than the play itself.

The genre of murder mysteries has been tried and tested in almost every medium - books, films, television and theatre, popularized in the mid-20th century by legends such as film director Alfred Hitchcock and novelist-cum-playwright Agatha Christie (ranked by UNESCO as the most widely read British author, with even Shakespeare coming in second!). Upon its opening on the London stage on 25 November 1952, The Mousetrap received rave reviews from the press, critics swearing that they were left guessing who the murderer was right up to the last minute and reeling from surprise at the riveting climax of the play. But do modern audiences, having grown up in a generation of suspense films and to whom the genre is anything but avant garde, experience that similar transcendental effect? Perhaps not.

Yet there are plenty of good things to say about this production. It takes a perfectly ordinary situation, a group of travelers staying at a small lodge in wintry England, and weaves a masterful plot of suspense involving a homicidal serial killer, three victims and an authoritative police inspector. The sheer believability of the circumstances confronted by the characters draws one deeply into the plot and before one is aware, Christie's tapestry of interlocking stories and intense scenes have reached their chilling and dramatic climax.

The cast as a whole is commendable but one cannot help but lament the patchy standard of acting attained by the male lead - the energetic and commanding



A Confederacy of Dunces
John Kennedy Toole

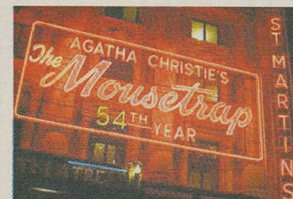
This book should be issued to every university student on the planet, along with the free condoms and nightclub flyers. Then every student would have the guide of Ignatius J. Reilly to follow. Are you doing something worthwhile with your education and your opportunities? Or are you throwing them away, because you're too wrapped up in your own pretension? Ignatius is the very personification of pretension, an ugly, bloated bore. The cast of characters whom he happens upon on his adventures throughout New Orleans are hilariously captured, and each strand of the book ties together perfectly. John Kennedy Toole, who committed suicide shortly after failing to find a publisher for this book, has crafted one of America's finest ever comic novels, and one which went on to win him a posthumous Pulitzer Prize for Literature after his mother finally succeeded in pushing it into print.

police officer, Detective Trotter. Sir Richard Attenborough, who cut his teeth on the role in the original production, remains a stage legend the modern actors are unable to surpass and the rendering of Trotter is uneven, at best. Amongst the other characters, Mr Paravicini, an enigmatic foreigner with dubious motives, and Miss Casewell, a seemingly tough mannish woman masking a fragile girl, stand out from the general mediocrity and deliver competent performances with little fuss.

After more than half a century, Christie's script has to be applauded for containing a fair share of laughs and some memorable lines. The chilling refrain "three blind mice" still evokes a feeling of unease amongst the audience and the antics of campy Christopher Wren and grouchy Mrs Boyle continue to send one into fits and starts of laughter. And yes, we cannot deny, the climax does make for very good theatre indeed, fifty-odd years later.

Director Peter Byrne continues the fine English stage tradition of by the use of deft comic timing and delightful dramatic irony, making the plot flow smoothly and keeping the audience constantly entertained. Indeed, The Mousetrap remains a perfect example of English theatre as it should be and for this reason alone, should continue to receive its legion of eager theatergoers for many years to come. Go it see and become a part of theatre history!

naeemkapadia

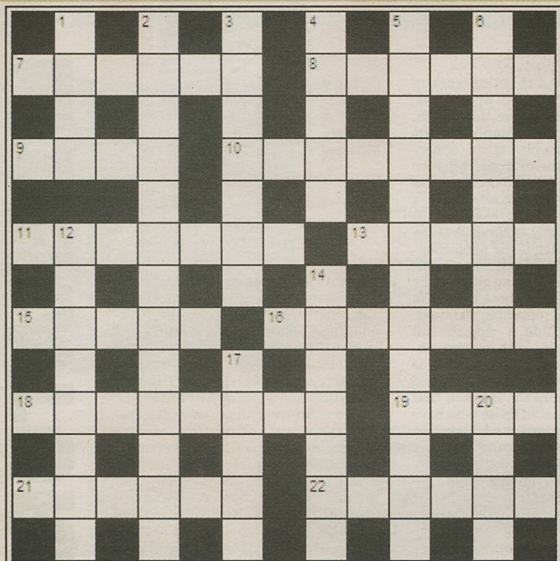


LITERATURE

THEATRE

CROSSWORD16

SET BY LUPUS



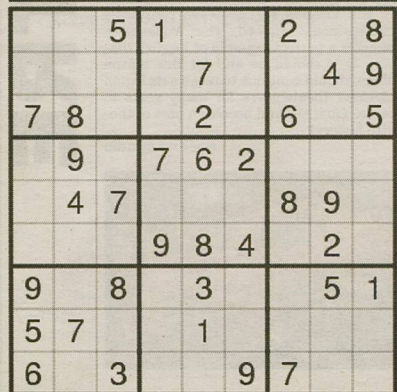
Across

- 7. Nearly (6)
- 8. Donkey noise (3-3)
- 9. Sides of a doorway (4)
- 10. Kept for a purpose, booked (8)
- 11. Completely, absolutely (7)
- 13. Oak's nut (5)
- 15. Dramatic singing? (5)
- 16. Sharp rebuttal (7)
- 18. Dangerous zones, potshots (anag.) (3, 5)
- 19. Rise (4)
- 21. Skin inflammation (6)
- 22. Insanity (6)

Down

- 1. Claim, appeal (4)
- 2. Betrayed, deceived (6-7)
- 3. Disturb, agitate (6)
- 4. Stage (of development) (5)
- 5. Stretch for pedestrians (5, 8)
- 6. e.g. beaver (5, 3)
- 12. Best (3)
- 14. Small pastry (7)
- 17. Colourful aquatic skeleton (5)
- 20. Curved passageway, chief (4)

SUDOKU16



VERY HARD

VERY LIMP

Ask

Auntie Shaw



Boys and girls, that foam party was gorgeously soapy wasn't it? All that young fresh skin around the dance floor made me envy you all. Mind you, Mr Shaw is a fan of the wrinkles - you learn to make use of what you have as you get older. Ooh, how exciting! You've all been ever so kind with your emails, pokes and messages. If you are a spiffingly gorgeous lad or lass, please do attach your photograph to your emails so I can be pleased whilst replying to your tantrums. In the meantime, young 'uns, here are some more tissues and issues for the week. We've got brave souls, desperate measures, last resorts and of course, as always, deadly debauchery. Enjoy my lust filled lampooners!

Ooh a little changing rooms role-play! I always find anything furry goes down well. When in doubt, make use of old cutlery held against a lamp to create effective lighting. For soft curvaceous tones, use the back of spoon to create an arch across your room. For those rather harsh nights, a mini disco if you like, use a fork. Your friends and foes will be in awe at the trend you radiate. You will be the talk of the town child! Food that solidifies onto ceilings or walls can turn into beautiful modern abstract art.

Check the expiry date
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Dear Auntie

Can you print this is next week's Beaver? I am a 2nd Year IR student. I would like to send a message to the girl in the LL278 lecture. We met on Tuesday and sat next to each other again by pure coincidence on Thursday. We really hit it off but I didn't get her name or number. I've now changed course so I may never see her again. We talked about how we both bought the same lunch from the Quad on Tuesday. She will know who she is. Tell her to find me so I can finally take her out for that second panini. Thank you Auntie!

Dear Auntie

I am braved the AU Rugby initiation ritual this year. I no longer have a liver, my anus is sore and my girlfriend has not spoken to me since certain photos were released on Facebook of me engaged in activity with other women (and men) which was not entirely kosher. Can I get my life back?

2nd Year
History and International Relations

Name Withheld

Oh you brave boy! I had to print this lovely quest of love as soon as I read it. Young lady, whoever you are, bless this man with your company. If you don't, may I? Please do keep Auntie posted on how the panini tasted!

Ah there's always one this time every year. You have a few options dearest athlete. (a) Succumb to your fellow lads. It will take a bit of getting used to but you will soon start enjoying the pleasures of the scrum half (b) Deny everything (c) Swing both ways and embrace your gift. To be honest ladette, you knew what you were getting into. As a further warning, the Barrel may be cancelled this year but I'm certain the 'mixed grill' will turn up at and AU romp party before Christmas.

Bite into that chilli sausage
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Lubricate generously
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Dear Auntie

The library is so FUCKING busy. Why does the LSE insist on a higher intake every year?! I've spent a week searching for HM2750 S41 and all the library has provided me with this year is queues, full computer areas and a severe lack of set texts. Also, why are there so many students loitering around the entrance of the course collection - get your cards ready BEFORE you walk through the turnstile. On top of all this, I got a severe electric shock from the spiral banister this week. I hate them all!

Dear Auntie

I made a bit of a mess at the most recent careers fair I went to, literally. Taking advantage of free alcohol on an empty stomach wasn't the best idea. My future employers thought I was booked entertainment for the night rather than a potential candidate. What do I do?

Name Withheld
Bitter 3rd Year

My my, I could feel your anger lash out and me from the screen. You need a trip to my dear old friends at St Philips. They offer some incredible student massages and a certain medic in the Y building gives you more than you bargained for. Ooh! To get over your library ranting, why not turn your library visits into a fun activity? Eye flirting always works for me, a bit of a saucy glance here and there may end up with a lot more than a massage. Failing that, lurk behind the dark shelves and trick or treat your fellow academics. That will teach them to get in your way!

Desperate
3rd Year, Actuarial Science

Oh dear, the milkrounds aren't going well, hmm? Put a spin on things, lad, and look out for the positives. At least they will remember you and they will know that you know how to have a good time. Use your flair for a party as an outstanding quality not many fellow actuaries possess

Boo!
Auntie Shaw

Boogie with those figures
Auntie Shaw xoxo

Dear Auntie

The shoeboxes we get given in halls are so bland and uninspiring. I need a cheap and easy way to brighten up my room without a trip to Habitat or Ikea. Advice?

If you want to share (or scare) me with you problems, rants and general nonsense, please do get in touch at thebeaver.partb@lse.ac.uk or through Auntie Shaw on Facebook. As explicit and long as you want; the juicier the better - let's push those editorial boundaries to their limits! You are guaranteed to remain completely anonymous and if you send me chocolate, I'll be an extremely delighted Auntie Shaw. Until next week my bizarre boys, girls and transgender dahlings!

Carrs Saunders

Ever your Auntie

xoxo

Beaverlingus "Exclusive Bennett Interview" TimeOut

C
M
Y
K

ng, gifted and black



Clare Ashton is not seduced by the young pretender to Tony's crown

This has been an important week for the Conservative Party. The party conference is an opportunity to rally the troops behind a clear vision and seduce the media into thinking that this time you really mean business. A bit of a disappointment then. The fact of the matter is for anyone not charmed by his good looks (and I thought it was funny when they said Tony Blair was a looker)-David Cameron has offered very little that's new.

The key areas of concern set out by Dave included support for single sex marriages, the NHS, intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, tough on crime and the causes of crime (sound familiar?) and the environment. For those members of the audience who were not asleep this is not what you expect from leader of the Conservative Party. Dave peddled traditional Tory concerns such as immigration, tax and Europe and jibed at some of the senior fossils. How much of what he said truly reflects Conservative concerns and how much is populist appeal?

It is hard to subdue two suspicions: the first being Dave is Tony's number one fan. The second is that Dave is an untrustworthy PR savvy. If one or both of these are true then the electorate and the Tories will lose out. To take the first, Dave's concerns and opinions on issues are almost identical to Blair's. Indeed many political pundits were quick to point out that his speech on Wednesday might as easily have come from Blair. Was his red tie a result of confusion? The emphasis on family and marriage and his concerns over society and the NHS do not look like Tory policy. Perhaps I am mistaken but the 'party at prayer' embrace single sex marriage? I somehow doubt it. The Conservative Party is faced with a dilemma - abandon all previously held beliefs and get elected - or reject Mr 'I'll say what the public want to hear' and face the wilderness again.

Secondly, Dave is not to be trusted; not by his party or by the electorate. What Dave says is crafted beautifully. Even the most ardent Conservative critic cannot disagree with the need to be concerned about the environment, better education and a better NHS. Indeed his support of same sex marriages is commendable. But most of what he said missed what we want to hear most - how is he going to change

things. Yes, of course we all want a better Britain, but what does that actually mean to him and how would he do that: I'm not sure Dave quite knows that himself. he talks about commitment and marriage but how much has he committed to anything ; cough during his speech and you would have missed the only morsel of policy on offer.

Where he does excel is in making himself appeal to



Dave is not to be trusted - not by his party or by the electorate

ference?

sive party based upon compassionate conservatism.

Mr. Obama, as a freshman senator, has not yet had the opportunity to lay out a grand vision for the future of the Democratic Party. However, one can see in his speeches the makings of a centrist. He speaks comfortably and confidently of the importance of his faith. Most Democrats drop religious references in an all too conspicuous and patronising manner. More generally, Mr. Obama is not an ideologue and he exhibits a willingness to work across the aisle, a quality becoming all too uncommon in America's climate of political polarisation. He adheres to a liberal line that is based on tolerance, social justice and expanding opportunity, a sort of compassionate liberalism.

But perhaps the greatest similarity between these two men is the constant stream of criticism they have had to endure as their respective parties' golden boys. The charge is always the same: "all style and no substance." Each man's reticence on concrete policy proscriptions is due in part to a strategy of not revealing too much of their hand. Mr. Cameron is

avoiding specifics in order to avoid preemptive attacks from Labour well before the next general election. He is laying out an enticing governing philosophy in order to get people interested. Mr. Obama must not look as though he is shirking his responsibilities in the Senate by grandstanding on the kind of issues that are likely to come up in the next presidential campaign. He is engaged in the traditional presidential striptease which involves trips to Iowa and generally being coy about his intentions.

Of course, the lack of substance is also directly linked to each man's inexperience. There are benefits to being a so-called "empty suit." Elected officials with long track records often get into trouble for old votes when they try to capture a higher post. United States Senators have had particular trouble with this reality. Additionally, politics are becoming increasingly personality based. A charismatic leader, even one short on ideas, that appeals to a wide base of voters is certainly a boon to any political party. John Kerry is the quintessential example of the danger of having a presidential

candidate with a long voting record and no personality.

However, an empty suit is also a huge liability. Voters are only impressed by smoke and mirrors for so long. A party leader or presidential candidate bereft of substance who faces an experienced heavyweight such as Gordon Brown or John McCain may find themselves in over their heads. But that is a long term consideration. Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama will see the worst of it before they get anywhere near a general election. The true challenge for these fledgling leaders will be to escape the process of platform formation in Mr. Cameron's case and the Democratic primaries in Mr. Obama's case.

Mr. Cameron may have prevented the 2006 Conservative Conference from disintegrating into warfare over tax cuts, foreign policy and education but he may not be able to do so in future. As the next general election looms, the voices of dissent may become emboldened, throwing Mr. Cameron's leadership into question and making the Tories look like a bunch of mean old men all over again.

The 2008 Democratic primaries will be a crowded

field. Mr. Obama, should he run, will have to fend off challenges from an imposing list of possible contenders such as Hillary Clinton, Al Gore, John Kerry and Senator Joe Biden of Delaware as well as a host of other less well known hopefuls. He risks being subjected to the same treatment that was used to dismantle John Edwards' presidential campaign in 2004. Mr. Edwards, like Mr. Obama, was a one term senator from North Carolina with a telegenic smile and a moving stump speech entitled "The Two Americas" that dealt with economic inequality.

But the most important questions are these: Are the optimism and revolutionary zeal that these men exude contagious? Will their message ever be bigger than just one man? Are the Conservatives and Democrats ready and willing to undertake deep structural and philosophical change? Or are Mr. Cameron and Mr. Obama merely being used as spit and polish? Do they represent nothing more than a fresh face on a languishing party, or window dressing masquerading as reform? ■

the majority: his job as Conservative leader is a PR show job. And I'm not only talking about webcams or push-bikes, or commissioning a new party symbol pretty but totally meaningless. He seems to have ignored the fact he is Conservative leader and is on a mission to seduce the middle ground by making carefully crafted statements about popular issues, aided by his closest advisor Steven Hilton; who has to be commended for his marketing. But does Dave really believe what he is saying, and will he abandon it all once elected? His party certainly think he will. It was reported in the news recently that Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Duncan said not to take seriously Dave's anti-business stance. Clearly then, even if Dave is genuine in what he says his cabinet does not follow suit.

The British public and indeed the Conservative Party have a lot to lose either way. If Dave truly does believe in his populist rhetoric it will damage politics. The space for choice and accountability in politics is diminishing as all parties clamour for the middle, letting their political principles pass them by. Dave says he wants to be a PM, not a President, but all the spin and media orientation surrounding him leaves one to question the role of the party in his journey to power. If Dave represents the future of politics then the future is neither bright nor orange, but probably Brown. ■

A troubled future in Thailand

Yee To Wong analyses the effects of the Thailand coup on Southeast Asia

In a rather dramatic fashion, the military leaders of Thailand staged a bloodless coup to oust the popularly elected prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, last month. While the shock waves stirred by images of tanks being rolled onto the streets of central Bangkok have still not subsided, there are real grounds for worries about the uncertainty and instability unleashed by this shocking episode. The potential repercussions would rock not only Thailand, which once boasted itself as one of the region's most solid democracies, but its neighbours and fellow members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well.

The political future of post-coup Thailand is not without promising signs: the change of government has been welcomed by many Thais who saw Thaksin as corrupt and autocratic. In addition, the appointment of the well-respected ex-army chief Surayud Chulanont as the country's new prime minister reflects some degree of political savvy on the part of the military junta. The army leaders have even agreed to talks with Islamic rebels in the country's south. Some have argued that the coup may have been the most democratic event in Thailand since Thaksin took office five years ago. Veenarat Laohapakakul, a commentator for Thai newspaper The Nation,



General Sonthi Boonyaratglin, the army chief and junta leader, may find it hard to give up power or restore democracy so quickly. Although an interim 'civilian' prime minister has been chosen, the junta will most probably continue to 'assist' the new government in ruling the country. Even if the generals let the cabinet do its job without interfering, they will still have a strong hand in choosing a body to draft a new constitution.

The reaction of many foreign governments and human-rights bodies to the coup has so far been negative. The United Nations' human rights chief, Louise Arbour, condemned the junta's restrictions on free speech and freedom of assembly. The United States has suspended \$24 million in military aid and is considering further sanctions if civil rights are not swiftly restored. The Thai economy could suffer a further hit after the 2004 tsunami. The coup has perhaps frozen talks of a proposed free-trade pact with the US. In addition, foreign companies are likely to remain cautious and delay investments. Dutch bank ABN Amro said it expected a period of uncertainty in Thailand and the "ultimate resolution could come from an election."

Many countries in Asia have gone a long way to escape the haunting legacy of military

authoritarianism, the Thai military coup could potentially have a ripple effect across Asia and plunge the region back into the dark ages. In fact, many of Thailand's neighbours have expressed their genuine concern. Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi of Malaysia appeared shocked at the sudden and unexpected crash of democracy in neighbouring Thailand: "This way of changing government does not go down well – an election is a better proposition." The Indonesian foreign ministry also expressed its concern in a statement emphasising the principles of democracy, as being an important element of the ASEAN community.

More profoundly, the military coup has set a dangerous precedent not only for Thailand but for the whole region. The Philippines is a good example; plagued by repeated coup threats and coup attempts, the government has to constantly manoeuvre to appease the generals. Back in February, President Gloria Arroyo had declared an emergency rule following an alleged threat to overthrow her. Analysts have forecasted a tumultuous time ahead of Mrs Arroyo until the end of her presidency in 2010 amid restive armed forces.

The coup in Thailand indeed represents a significant setback for the region. Ong Keng Yong, the secretary-general of ASEAN has

clearly stated any sudden change of government would be detrimental for the organisation as a whole. ASEAN has been active in promoting human rights, the establishment of civil society and

temporarily off the hook. Meanwhile, the instability in Thailand might spill over the borders. Cambodia's leader Hun Sen, ahead of his official visit to Australia next week, has warned in advance against any attempt to stage a coup to topple him during his absence. The Thai coup has sparked fear among the region's other players that military intervention in civilian politics may become an unstoppable trend.

Southeast Asia, being placed between China and India; the region's two emerging superpowers is strategically important in the global political landscape. In the context of the ongoing War on Terror, ASEAN member states, with their significant Muslim populations, increasingly find themselves faced with serious challenges, including the rise of terrorism and religious extremism. If the instability instigated by the coup cannot be contained, chaos will most certainly ensue. But nobody can predict the future and the coup may even do good in the long run by rectifying a defective democracy. Nevertheless, the military will have to deliver its promise fairly quickly and systematically – or it risks losing not only the trust of the Thai people, but the stability and prosperity of the whole region. ■



Although an interim 'civilian' prime minister has been chosen the junta will most probably continue to 'assist' the new government in ruling the country

argues: "What is a democracy when its leader is actually a despot in disguise? And what is a military coup if the military pledges its allegiance to democracy?" The Bangkok Post also dubbed the coup "a step back so as to move forward."

However, history could easily repeat itself. Thailand is no stranger to coups: there have been 18 of them in the past 72 years. The last one in 1991 was initially popular for overthrowing a government widely perceived as corrupt, but public opinion soon became unfavourable as the army clung to power. Many political analysts are concerned that



The change of government has been welcomed by many Thais who saw Thaksin as corrupt and autocratic

the consolidation of democratic practices. In fact, Thailand has led the group in taking its toughest stance yet against the military junta in Myanmar, however the coup has taken so many people by surprise that Myanmar, once the target of international pressure, is

Factfile: Thailand



- Siam was the country's official name until 11 May 1949.
- The word Thai means "freedom" in the Thai language
- A revolution took place in 1932, this was mostly bloodless but led to the creation of a constitutional monarchy.
- In 2004 a tsunami left an estimated 8,212 dead, 8,457 injured, 2,817 missing and 7,000 displaced.

Inside the world of Al-Jazeera

Features Editor **Fatima Manji** speaks to **Yosri Fouda**, Chief Investigative Correspondent for the Al-Jazeera network

From Day One Al-Jazeera was controversial," Yosri Fouda boldly declares to an audience of almost 500 journalists, academics and students here at the LSE. Fouda appears to be proud of this fact and this is clear from his smiling face, as he makes such a statement. As Chief Investigative Correspondent, Fouda is now presenter of a programme entitled "Top Secret," which is similar in style to the BBC's Panorama. Most famously, he spent two days in Karachi with the masterminds behind the September 11th attack; Ramzi Binalshibh and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

When standing in front of his audience, Fouda is confident and witty, engaging them with his arguments and persuasively making the case in favour of Al-

project which was largely unprecedented in the Arab world; an electronic media network not directly or indirectly in the control of a particular state. With pride, Fouda describes how attempts to intimidate the network, were unsuccessful. Whether it was harassment and arrests of their journalists, closing down of offices, smearing of the network's reputation by Arab regimes or the American government; Al-Jazeera persevered.

So with Al-Jazeera now approaching its tenth anniversary and beginning to launch a new English channel; 'Al-Jazeera international,' what does Fouda feel has been achieved? He points out Al-Jazeera has always faced a massive task in attempting to present high quality programmes to a mass audience when 50% of its target population in the Middle East, are illiterate; "How would you even begin to democratise a people, when they cannot read and write?" Fouda suggests having to deal with this may have affected the quality level and sophistication of certain programmes, catering for an audience consisting of "everyone from the Yemeni Bedouin to the Harvard professor of Syrian origin" is no easy task. Yet he sees Al-Jazeera as having at least partly achieved its aim of education on key issues such as politics, human rights, voting procedures and freedom of speech. He sees the Arabic channel as having "introduced a little bit of freedom," but acknowledges there is a lot more to be done; "It takes time to get people to understand the concept of speaking your mind." Concepts such as viewers 'calling in' to express their political views on a news programme, were previously alien to Arab channels but Al-Jazeera has now set a precedent and other news programmes in the region have begun to follow the trend such as rival; 'Al-Arabiya,' set up in 2003.

Al-Jazeera's record is "a big achievement" says Fouda, but "being ten years old is a frightening age...you can no longer afford to make mistakes." He speaks of how many in the media world, were initially sceptical as to whether Arabs would make good



could survive resistance from hostile states; when Al-Jazeera "defies every taboo." Today, Al-Jazeera is known internationally and Fouda narrates his recent trip to France where he saw the channel being held in high regard and compared to the BBC and CNN by an upcoming French media outlet. With the launch of the 'Al-Jazeera International,' the network is also likely to grow in both size and reputation. Fouda admits he personally felt lukewarm towards the idea of an international channel, believing the resources could have been spent more effectively elsewhere, however he recognises it has a place in the niche market of an 'alternative' news source for non-Arabic speakers. He emphasises the English version is to be editorially independent from the main channel, but says it is unlikely to be "fundamentally different to the

Al-Jazeera Arabic." A greater challenge now lies ahead for Al-Jazeera; the international channel will have to appeal to a wider audience, than ever before.

And what of all the criticism? The decision of Al-Jazeera to broadcast Al-Qaeda tapes and thus give platform to the likes of Bin Laden has certainly been controversial and many have seen this as perpetuating terrorism. Fouda says his personal reading of the situation is that the role of journalists is to provide all the facts; "Al-Jazeera is not about telling people what to think, we just tell them what happened and it's up to them to make up their minds." He also categorically denies the common myth that Al-Jazeera has broadcast beheadings on television and points out the double standards of the American government who on the one hand criticise their broadcasting of Bin

Laden tapes, but also pressurised the channel to show graphic images of Saddam's sons at the time of the Iraq war, in order to boost morale and prove that these individuals were truly dead.

Clearly, Fouda is concerned over the hindrances facing journalists, in this day and age; stating it has become difficult for journalists to do their jobs when there is a war waged against them in the form of 'spin-doctoring.' But despite all the conspiracy theories and hostility towards Al-Jazeera and even towards Fouda himself, he still clearly enjoys his work and remains optimistic about the future; "I consider myself lucky to be part of this generation of Arab journalists" and speaks with pleasure at the prospect of continuing to "empower a people, who were not meant to be empowered." ■



"What happened in the beginning was nothing short of a revolution...I consider myself lucky to be part of this generation of Arab journalists."

Jazeera's controversial editorial decisions. Even when he is faced with questions which are challenging by any measure, Fouda maintains composed and provides well-articulated answers; "Does Al-Jazeera make the clash of civilisations more or less likely?" asks one audience member. In reply Fouda confidently says; "It's not part of my job as a journalist to challenge the course of history, but to report it."

Egyptian by birth, Fouda is now based in London. He jokes about his Egyptian background; noting both the restrictive political context of the country and the stereotype of Egyptians as being funny by saying; "We like to joke in Egypt, it's the only form of political participation we're allowed." Fouda initially worked for the BBC's Arabic subsidiary and was involved in reporting the conflict in Bosnia together with well-known British journalist Martin Bell. Following the dissolving of the BBC's Arabic subsidiary, Fouda along with many other former BBC reporters joined the newly created Al-Jazeera in 1996. "What happened in the beginning was nothing short of a revolution," says Fouda; describing the formation of the Al-Jazeera network. He speaks of how Al-Jazeera embarked on a



"It takes time to get people to understand the concept of speaking your mind."

journalists or if such a channel

A little less quick to judge

Laura Coombe highlights the need for greater understanding of mental illness in Britain

If asked to identify what Stephen Fry, Robbie Williams and at least one percent of the population have in common, there are, I think, few of us who would come up with trumps with 'bi-polar disorder'. After all, bi-polarity's other pseudonym, 'manic depression', has traditionally conjured up images of men in white coats, and sterile, prison-like hospital wards. Hats-off then to Fry and his guests for their frank and open admissions last week on *BBC 2*; a brave and unprecedented attempt to raise awareness about the condition, teaching viewers that mental illness is a reality in many homes, demonstrating that conditions like manic depression are far more 'normal' than we think.

So what is bi-polar exactly? Doubt surrounds the causes of the condition, but essentially, sufferers are prone to extreme mood-swings, ranging from lowest-of-the-low depression, to delusional euphoria. This is particularly dangerous because it is impossible to predict and prepare for a change in mood. It is perhaps the madness and energy of the momentary highs that contributes to the unique creative ability of personalities like Fry. Indeed many recognised geniuses like Plato, Beethoven, Dickens, Newton and Van Gogh had creative capacities that were driven by bouts of manic intensity followed by mind-numbing despair. Yet, as Fry acknowledges, struggling with the condition on a day-to-day basis is no picnic. During the manic periods, sufferers can reach a state of psychosis, losing all sense of reality. Indeed, one individual interviewed admitted to believing himself to be God in his most extreme manic phases. Meanwhile, the all-consuming lows have driven many to attempt suicide, including Fry at the age of seventeen. The condition is a lifelong sentence. There is no cure, or any foolproof form of treatment, particularly as the severity and symptoms varies so much from individual to individual. Sufferers have to experiment with different levels of medication and psychotherapy, and some even resort to shock treatment.

Given the clear need for help and support by those suffering mental health problems like manic depression, reports about the poor standard of care on offer released by the Health Commission last week are shocking. A large proportion of mental health care is community, rather than hospital-based, provided by local implementation teams, consisting of social workers, GPs, nurses and counsellors. The fact that only one in ten were rated excellent, with over half receiving only a fair grade, therefore raises serious concerns. The report found significant gaps to exist in out-of-hours assistance, insufficient availability of

facing mental health problems every year, and waiting lists of 12 months or more for counselling, the necessary help and support is simply not there.

All of this may indeed seem like enough to deal with and yet, it seems that by the far

Perhaps the stigma originates in ancient times when depression was believed to be symptomatic of demonic possession. Attitudes over the ages have certainly been hostile, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, mental hospitals were seen



Many recognised geniuses like Plato, Beethoven, Dickens, Newton and Van Gogh had creative capacities that were driven by bouts of manic intensity followed by mind-numbing despair.

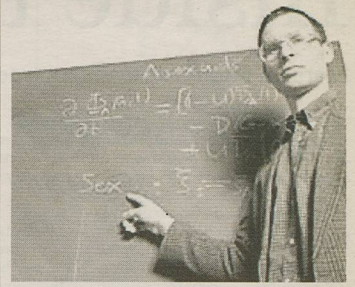
'talking therapies' such as counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and psychoanalysis, and unsatisfactory access to information. Part of the problem is that new therapies such as CBT have become a victim of their own success; as the positive effects are confirmed by research, the demand for treatment is outstripping the supply. With one in four people suffering

the biggest obstacle for sufferers of mental disorders is the social stigma. Studies conducted by the Mental Health Foundation show that fear of prejudice and labelling can prevent people acknowledging that they are ill and seeking the necessary help. A third of the respondents of one survey claimed to have been dismissed or forced to resign from their jobs following diagnosis, and 24% had received hostility from their neighbours and local communities. More distressingly, over half reported discrimination from their families and friends, with their loved ones 'distancing' themselves when they were needed most.

Yet, the question that we should be concerned with is why mental health problems carry so much baggage, particularly as they seem to be so common. Depression has always existed. Indeed, King Saul is described as experiencing depression and committing suicide in the Old Testament.

as a place to shut away society's undesirable. Meanwhile, the twentieth century saw a number of horrifying experiments being conducted on the mentally ill; charted in Ken Kesey's infamous novel, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. Today, in the twenty-first century, we are less prone to locking people away, but the prejudice lives on. Why? The Mental Health Foundation claims that discrimination and hostility derives from a lack of understanding, for which the media is partly responsible. Two thirds of the press coverage of mental illness tends to connect it with violence, involving negative stereotyping and tabloid dramatisation. It is all too easy to accuse someone of being weak, the popular admonishment being, "pull yourself together!" Never again will those words pass from my lips, and I hope that anyone reading this article will be a little less quick to judge. ■

SEX In The UniverCity



Don't Hold Your Breath Bonnie

I hate scorned women. I can't bear women who say, 'Us girls should keep together, men are all bastards'. All this sounds like it comes from the 'rejected woman' who's in the past been cringingly blind and now can't really cope by herself but is left with no choice. Yuck. However...

I was listening to Bonnie Tyler's 'Holding Out For A Hero' on the bus on my way home, and letting my mind wander back to the more pleasant moments from *Footloose the Musical*, in which the song appeared, which contained plenty of strapping men armoured with sixpicks and hard hats. Mmmm... In a desperately cheesy moment, head leant against the rain splattered window, I got to thinking; are there really any actual heroes? When was I last saved from a burning house, whisked off my feet by a knight in shining armour, my purity defended poetically in front of the UGM? Never. Admittedly, I've never been in quite the situation for such overblown romantic sick-inducing gestures. Nevertheless, I never ever hear about them and what's more I rarely hear anything nice about straight men, at least, not since prepubescent boys used to write us love letters with accompanying candy.

I've searched hard for one. Let's take Brad Pitt, the poster-boy over most girls bed; fighting hero in *Troy*; romantic hero in *Legends of the Fall*; boys' hero in *Fight Club*. Turns out, Pitt is a wife cheating bastard who settles for slug-lipped Jolie over a litte-bit-older-and-not-quite-so-good-looking Aniston. OK - so the above mentioned heroic feats of Pitt were scripted - but where else are we to look for our heroes? I don't want to hear about heroes of the environment or the poor. Admirable they may be but I (read: spoilt and demanding) want someone willing to, well not quite willing to lose their life/limbs (we're only young still) for me, but maybe sacrifice a little bit and not be total shits.

And men can be shits. To date, these are the offences men have caused me: making false promises after false promises, been selfish lovers, cheated on me, used me to get back at exes, used me to invoke jealousy in their 'on a break' girlfriends, let me unwittingly become the 'other woman', smashed a beer bottle over a friend's head for looking at me (note: that is not heroic in the 'I was defending your honour' way - it's being lucky to be 6'6 and shit), and turning out to be gay. In fact, the gay one was probably the only truly nice one of the bunch. So I've reluctantly joined the hairy arm-pitted ranks - all straight men are wankers and are incapable of being heroic.

Sometimes (usually in the aftermath of one the above mentioned offences) I really do feel as though the world would be simpler, more peaceful, and a whole lot better if we (the girls? Sisterhood?) ganged up, bottled their sperm and cut off their dicks.

I've started seeing someone recently who, if you read his dating CV, has all the characteristics of shit. In fact, let's call him 'McShit'. He seems surprisingly nice but I'm no fool. I know what he's done in the past. We'll see how things pan out. I'll keep you posted... I'm no Bonnie, I'm certainly not holding my breath. But while the sex is great and he seems nice, it's now time to learn to enjoy men with no expectations. Take every man with a pinch of salt. ■



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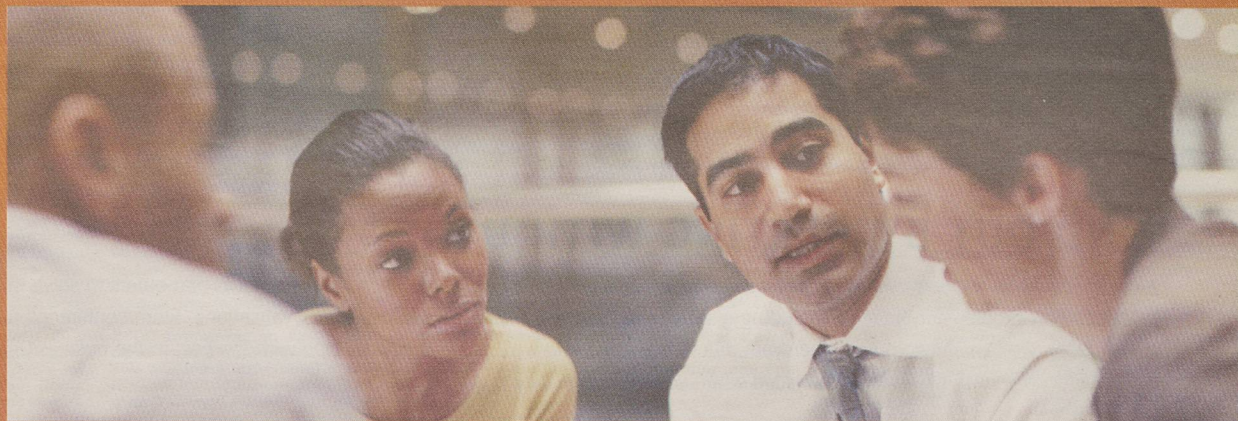
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TUESDAY

12:00-13:00
Mauritius AGM S78
12.30
Sikh-Punjab 3rd Annual Bhangra Run -
Meet outside library
13:00-14:00
AIESEC AGM G108
Lebanese AGM D306
Jewish AGM Y002
Economics AGM D302
14:00-15:00
Arts AGM D602
Malaysia-Singapore AGM S75
15:00-16:00
CEEDS AGM S421
16:00-17:00
French Connection AGM H102
Persian AGM S53
18:00-19:00
Living Wage / Citizens for Social Justice
AGM S421
Ukrainian AGM U210
Budget Application Introduction Meeting
U8

WEDNESDAY

12:00-13:00
Sri Lankan AGM S78
13:00-14:00
International AGM U221
13.15 Catholic Society Mass Chaplaincy
14:00-15:00
Maths and Stats AGM U201
Hellenic AGM H102
Cypriot AGM E168
Food Tasting AGM U208
Asset Management AGM U208
Kenyan AGM V103
Asian Careers AGM G108
Hellenic AGM H102
15:00-16:00
Actuarial AGM S75
16:00-17:00
Hungarian AGM A698
Singapore (till 19.00) AGM D402
Finnish AGM L52
Triple Helix AGM S78
17:00-18:00
Corporate Responsibility AGM H206
Austrian AGM S306
Corporate Responsibility AGM H206
18:00-19:00
Public Affairs AGM D702

THURSDAY

13:00-14:00
AIESEC AGM
D202
14:00-15:00
Amnesty International AGM
D402
Development AGM
S75
16:00-17:00
Argentinian AGM
H102
17:00-18:00
Abacus AGM
H102
Peruvian AGM
D206
18:00-19:00
Stop the War Coalition AGM
S78
18.30 CU Central: Church - Why Bother?
TBC

FRIDAY

13:00-14:00
Inns of Court AGM
H102
15:00-16:00
Indonesian and Bruneian AGM
D111

All documents for the setting up and registration of a society are now available online! Go to lsesu.com/societies and select 'documents'

Congratulations to the following societies that have recently been set-up or reactivated, and have held their AGMs: Apogetics, Politics, Feminist.

Do you have feedback on the Freshers' Fair arrangements? Please get in touch with Societies Officer Arthur Krebbers

Do you want to be in the listings? Contact your societies officer Arthur Krebbers on su.societies@lse.ac.uk

Jimmy Tam, General Secretary
Thursday, 2-3PM

Joel Kenrick, Treasurer
Thursday, 2-3PM

Alexandra Vincenti, Education and Welfare
Thursday, 2-3PM

Ali Dewji, Communications
Friday, 1-2PM

Arthur Krebbers, Societies
Friday, 2-3PM

Aled Fisher, Environment and Ethics
Monday, 1-2PM

Fadhil Bakeer Markar, International Students
Tuesday 1-2PM

Emma Hallgren, Students with Disabilities
Tuesday 1-2PM

Shanela Haque, Anti-Racism
Friday, 10am-12pm

Will Barber, Returning Officer
Friday, 1-2PM

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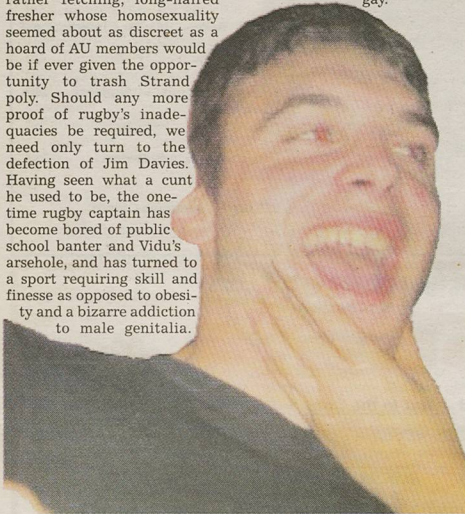
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Tackling Issues

Josh takes a swing...

It doesn't take me to tell the world how shit rugby is, the scum did that for themselves on Wednesday night. A War Studies degree from Kings is about the only thing more embarrassing than the karaoke which emanated from private school mouths more suited to rimming than to singing. Although congratulations are in order for the addition of a rather fetching, long-haired fresher whose homosexuality seemed about as discreet as a hoard of AU members would be if ever given the opportunity to trash Strand poly. Should any more proof of rugby's inadequacies be required, we need only turn to the defection of Jim Davies. Having seen what a cunt he used to be, the one-time rugby captain has become bored of public school banter and Vidus' arsehole, and has turned to a sport requiring skill and finesse as opposed to obesity and a bizarre addiction to male genitalia.

His transition to football may be a sign of things to come as anonymous egg-chaser (Rhys Meggy) joined in the chants of "FC 'til I Die" on the way to Wankabout. The only real challenge towards the slagging off of rugby, is doing so adequately in a 200 word limit, however AU Liaison officer, Joey Mellows, sums it up most eloquently in stating that rugby is simply "really, really, really gay."



Great Debate

The great mass debate



Phil Burkimsher

The Sports Personality of the Year award is seen by many to be an award for the greatest sporting achiever in the year. However if you look at the title of the award then this should not be the case. A personality is the combination of emotional, intellectual, and moral qualities that distinguishes an individual. Therefore the winner should be the sportsman or woman who has best demonstrated these qualities during the year. I believe that if you look at these qualities the outstanding candidate is Darren Clarke.

Golf prides itself in being a sport of integrity. While leading the Irish Open earlier in the year, following an overnight rain delay, Clarke's lie in the rough had been improved. Instead of going for the green as he would now be able to do, he chose to chip back onto the fairway. Although Clarke did not go on to win the tournament he was happy with his decision as any victory would have been hollow. Contrast this with round-ball. The constant diving and attempts to get other people

booked or sent off undermine the game. I don't think that Cristiano Ronaldo will be high up on many people's lists for the Overseas Sports Personality of the year.

Allied to this great show of sporting behaviour, Clarke contributed three points out of three in the Ryder Cup. He had been out of the game for eight weeks prior to this and many people felt that it was a foolish decision for Ian Woosnam to hand him a wild card into the team. This decision was clearly vindicated and the fact that Stenson won his match before Clarke should not take away from the huge contribution Clarke made to the team. The fact that he then broke down in tears having kept his emotion in check while playing showed his desire to help the team to victory. If anybody needs another reason to vote for Clarke, during the celebrations following the Ryder Cup he downed a pint of Guinness in about three seconds.



Tackling Issues

...Roland reciprocates

Where is this 'beautiful game' that we so often hear about? Does the cliché of...

"Football; a gentleman's game played by thugs & Rugby, a thug's game played by gentleman"

...seem to hold more grounding within the current sporting climate? Is there anyone out there who finds that the so-called beautiful game has reared an unusual ugly, often blonde high-lighted, diamond earring wearing, head in the past decade. While many of us young folk may in fact briefly remember the glory days of Eric Cantona and Ian Wright,

with honour and pride, many of the younger generation are being embraced by 'players' who lack such honourable characteristics. Football has lost its way, and rugby has definitely capitalised. The day that I see a rugby player driving a Porsche, dating Ms Chest-la-Roux and pouncing around Soho on a weekend will be the day that Jonny Wilkinson plays for England again (seemingly NEVER).

Until then, we can look forward to seeing David Beckham moan about his ingrowing toenail along with his doggy haircuts and silk skirts, and Ashley Cole cry over a £5000 a week deduction on his £50k a week job. It would seem that the gentleman's game played by thugs has now become a gentleman's game played by vain celebrities...long live rugby!!



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Rifle Trifle

Getting loaded at the rifle club



Jessica Meardle

Like a lamb being led to the slaughterhouse, I tiptoed into the abattoir that was the Freshers' fair almost two weeks ago. Expressions of confusion and vulnerability belied my nervous disposition and soon the blood-thirsty mob advanced. I had set my sights on tracking down the Australia and New Zealand society, mainly because, as everybody knows, New Zealanders are outrageously hot. What I didn't know, was that I was walking the wrong plank and was way off target. Once aware of this and pursuing a quick getaway, I came across what should have been the most terrifying club of all; the UL Rifle Club.

Neither bulletproof vest nor mace spray was necessary at this stall and I questioned whether those manning it were aware of the customary shoot-to-kill attitude of the freshers'

fair. When after at least 20 seconds they had not asked me to put my hand in my pocket I thought they might be a few shillings short of the pound. The first meeting was last Saturday afternoon, which I arrived to in the usual Irish tradition, no not drunk, but late. After a good half-hour wandering the streets, myself and two other stragglers managed to locate the rifle range.

Giggling girls opened the door to us dispelling the dark images I had of what gun clubbers might be like and I was relieved to find that there was nothing shady about the crowd. Soon we were being briefed on the safety aspects of the club—"Never point a gun at someone's head... Even as a joke" this point was non-negotiable and would definitely take a lot of the thrill out of the sport. Though nobody showed it, we were all gravely disappointed, but having taken so long to get there it was no use turning back now.

With that out of the way there was only one thing to do - get loaded - I mean load the guns. Let me paint you a pic-

ture... The targets are the size of the circle between your thumb and forefinger when you make an OK signal, they are 25 metres away from you and you are lying down with a .22 rifle pointing straight ahead. Your body is positioned with outstretched legs and your hips are pinned to the floor as if with superglue. Then comes the most important bit, you place your finger on the trigger, take aim and fire. Pulling the trigger prematurely generally means that you don't hit the spot, thus restraint and pacing are essential.

Once you've shot your load the natural thing to do is nod off to sleep, but fighting this natural inclination is necessary to make it to the next step, or stop, the bar. The true measure of any sports club lies not in its athletic prowess, but in their drinking. Though the session was not an all-nighter, I'm pretty sure I saw the potential for some more serious after hours target-practice to be had. For more information on the club email: stephen.turner@imperial.ac.uk

Fanny

Lil-lets, ladyboys, lesbians and lots of lovin'



The AU sex change



Yo ho-s! It seems after last week's naming and shaming you've all attempted (to no avail) to fly under Fanny's radar! Let me remind you, Fanny is everywhere, she sees all and hears all so there's no escaping. This week I'll be answering questions like which one-wheeled piece of garden equipment has a fetish for blowing raspberries on perfect strangers? Which club is slaggier, Netball or Football? And which Hockey club member does the best animal impersonation?

This week, upon entering her second home (the Tuns), Fanny was greeted with a barrage of aural abuse akin to Charlotte Church on helium. Now I know Men's Rugby like to hear the sound of their own voices but refusing to leave the karaoke set was taking it too far. Fanny decided to down a couple of snakey Bs to acquire her beer earplugs. Talking of beer and plugs, it was Netball who seemed to be having the most raucous of initiations, with Potty choosing an interesting technique to down a pint (see photo). Rugby opted for the age-old classic of "cock o'clock", with Fresher Dick Clawfruit "winning" the competition for being the biggest c*nt muffin, much to his own amusement.

Kath With NoNicksOn actually made an appearance this week, for all of ten minutes, until she was whisked off her feet by an eagle-eyed footballer who decided there was no point wasting time with small talk. Gobby Felon of Hockey fame was also whisked off her feet but unfortunately for her it was the stairs that caused this bird to take flight.

Shishar Panda demonstrated power had gone to his head when he worked the Walkabout basement, but after multiple rejections he resorted to molesting a rather willing Sucha Stateman, who went on to please many with a spot of inter-editor relations. Another Football slag enticed blonde eejit CameHo and Ho Harmmen, proving "I'm first

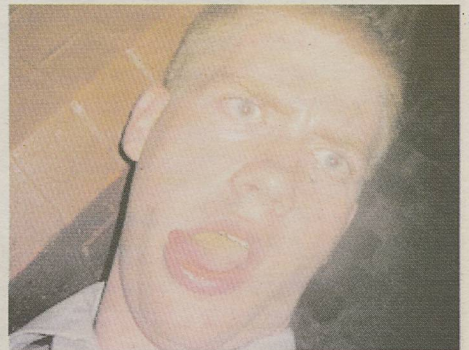
captain" is a versatile chat-up line in the realms of Walkabout. Deals WithBoys was witnessed literally devouring a mystery man, if anyone would like to come forward as the victim (in confidence) please go to www.anetballgirlatemyface.org.uk for advice and a list of local STI clinics.

Livesina TransitVan and Big Titt brought some culture to Walkabout with a dazzling show of Latin-American dancing followed by some Soho "culture" in the form of homoerotic displays of affection, whereas Slopper Palmsworth plumped for double-fisting a couple of fruity numbers.

It appears that the most popular sport in the LSEAU this week was actually Tonsil Tennis (sorry capoeira) and from the evidence provided, it seemed Football took the trophy for slaggiest team, although the detailed analysis into this was terminated because Fanny was getting sweaty.

All things considered it was a great start to the term, boys and girls, and I hope you keep up with all the good work! If any of you are stuck for someone to sexually aggravate, let me tell you I am currently very lonely (yes believe it or not Fanny is getting no attention) and would be happy to oblige in any form of romance/relations/sex games/bukkake that you may encounter.

Soggy Fanny kisses everyone
xxxx



Netball Initiation Special

Netball scoffs and scores on wednesday night

Netball is bigger and better than ever with 100 beauties in the club this year. With so many freshers joining the club, the captains knew a netball initiation was needed. When the boring formalities (trials) were out of the way, the netballers headed down to the Tuns on Wednesday ready for a night of debauchery and mayhem!

The captains thought the netball initiation would only damage the freshers livers. When Libby and Jen had asked the captains what their 2 favourite drinks were, they thought this was purely out of curiosity. Little did they realise that their drinks would be combined into beautiful cocktails. Jade and Georgie got off pretty easily since their favourite drinks both involved vodka. Lindsey was forced to

down a tasty mix of Smirnoff Ice and Corona while Rosie effortlessly guzzled Bacardi, gin, Diet Coke and cranberry.

Laura, aka Stomach of Steel, polished off a classy blend of vodka and Bacardi shots with ease. Still feeling thirsty, she then helped Jen down her snakebite. We were all concerned that Laura might still be sober so she was presented with another drink. Like a psychic epiphany both Jen and Libby experienced a flashback of a conversation about the netball initiation from earlier in the week...

Jen: "There's this great drinking trick where you put a tampon in either side of your mouth and then you have to down your drink before the tampons expand too much."

Libby: "That sounds gross! I don't know how we can try

and force any fresher to do that."

Laura: "That's really cool! I'd love to do that!"

Naturally the drink of choice for the tampon trick was snakebite. Before Laura was even handed the pint glass, the maxi-supersize-biggest-tampons-you-could-ever-purchase were expanding at a rapid rate. Laura only downed half her snakebite before the tampons had completely taken over her mouth. Without a sanitary bin in sight, Claudia knew the best place to put the snakebite stained tampons - give one to a footballer and the other to a rugby player. Joey's reaction was more priceless than a MasterCard ad when Laura put one of the tampons in his pint!

Laura was not the only netballer with a snakebite

smile. Helen received a snakebite for her birthday and downed it in a blink of an eye not even noticing its peculiar twist. Libby and Jen decided the best way to spice up their snakebites was with Mars bars. It was only because Jen had practised the trick of downing the drink followed by eating the Mars bar with no hands (and cheating by giving Laura some of her pint!) that Jen won the competition. NB this article may be biased since Libby is a sore loser and is writing the article.

The next section of our initiation involved serious marshmallow consumption. Nicci jumped at the chance to stuff as many marshmallows in her mouth while saying "I love netball". But in the end it was Charlie who won the competition.

In case intoxication slurred their speech to the point of complete incomprehension, Libby had devised a cunning plan. Each netballer was equipped with a serviette that contained their vital statistics: name, number, likes and where they would like to meet the lucky guy who received the serviette. Some of the most popular choices were: outside the bathroom in ten minutes, for a drink or two and when I've sobered up. When Libby had to question one netballer's request for 4 serviettes, her response was, "I'm on a mission!"

There were more netballers who knew one little serviette wasn't enough. Harry and freshly single Claudia put on some bright lipstick and attempted to kiss as many guys as they could in a minute. We

would let you know who won but we're still counting the tally!

These stories are only from the Tuns. This is partly because everyone has very few flashbacks from the Walkabout. We also didn't want to steal Fanny's limelight so we thought we'd leave it to her to take you through the messiness of the rest of the night.

On another note, netball's goal for this year is to sign up at least one male specimen. If you would like to be the first ever bloke to join netball, email Libby, E.Meyer@lse.ac.uk Just think about our club dinners - you surrounded by 100 sexy netballers. The boasting opportunities are endless...

Libby xx

Spotted!

Fanny's camera went flashing

Fanny



A Trifle with a Rifle

There are more layers to rifle club than one might think

Jessica Mcardle



Defending Darren

The great debate gets a response

Phil Burkimsher

10.10.06 thebeaver.sports@lse.ac.uk

Beaver sports

LSE lack sticking power



Louise and Ju

LSE Hockey Legends BIG BUMS

1
3

Location: A poisoned pitch

The first game of what looks to be an illustrious season for the LSE Women's Hockey Club (WHC) didn't go quite to plan... who gives a shit, it was only a friendly.

Pride was at stake as the sides lined up because of inter-team friendships, but mainly we were after a chance to see some new

recruits in action. We took a squad of 22 - standard - which proved to be quite a logistical nightmare. Nevertheless, it was LSE who stole a quick first goal. Nice one Gabba, after a great cross from the right flank by Jelly.

Much drama was to follow; Sarah Phe managed to get some 'big air' as she took

one for the team on a somewhat precarious surface, performing a complete wipe-out and landing on her ass, the ref jumping to the opportunity to tell her off for her theatrics! Newbie Laura Parfitt, or Paff as Sarah Fish christened her, did a good job both at left mid and right forward (showing that maybe she should've stuck with the stick, not the egg, from the beginning?!). An absolutely great performance, both on and off the pitch, from fresher Alex 'Hotchkiss' showed that although Meeny Patel has left us, we have a great prospect at centre forward to fill those big boots. Mark our words - one of these days those boots are gonna walk all over you...

The three RUMS goals came from quick counter-

attacking and a short corner. They could have had a couple more from shorts if not for first Juicy's bravery, for which she's got

a proud hockey injury, then Fishley's. Zoe Sully also put in a great effort between the posts with excellent shot stopping. We continued to boss the game in the middle of the park, with the Slav in her usual good form, and fine debuts from Betty Boop and Marie-Claire (not the magazine, the real live one).

Major fines have to be dished out to our new postie defender, Louise. She was sin binned on debut for waving her stick at the umpire in a threatening manner! The laughs from both sideline contingents showed it was all a bit of good 'Bant'



Venables, continued to sub someone on, not realizing the man down situation and we continued with 11 players on the pitch, unknown to the rest of LSE WHC - oh dear... Double fineage next week, Lolly.

All in all, a solid effort against a team two divisions above us - well done girls. Big thanks to all the squad, especially injured spectators (Reyes!). Good work followed at team dinners, but come Walkabout we were all past the point of noticing whether the penny was in our drink or not. All we can say is good luck at initiations girls... it's going to be carnage.

Louise and Ju
xx

"... but I'm a REAL dog..." Andrea Jelic, Hockey